TOTAL
ECLIPSE
BOOK ONE

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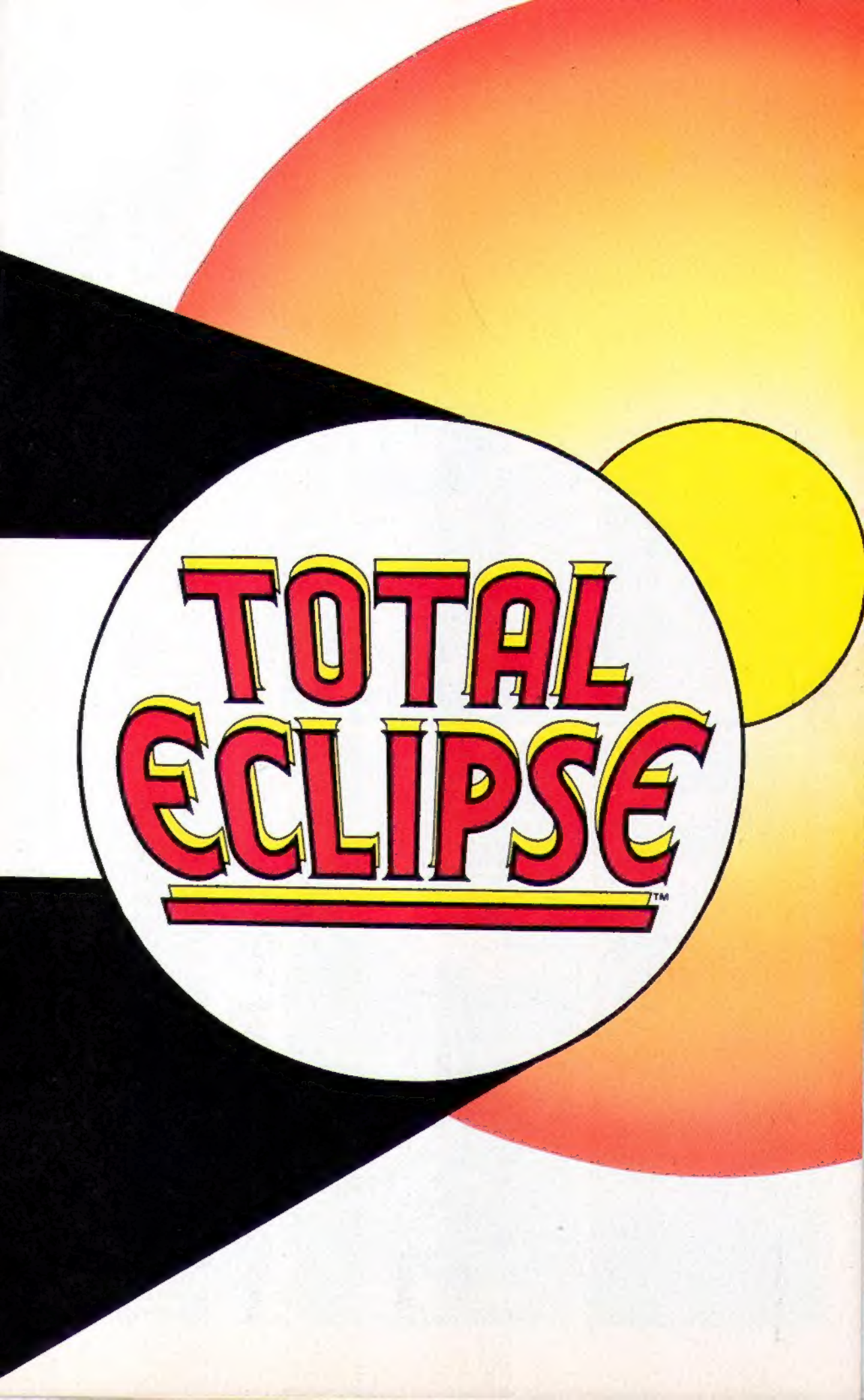
TOTAL
ECLIPSE
™

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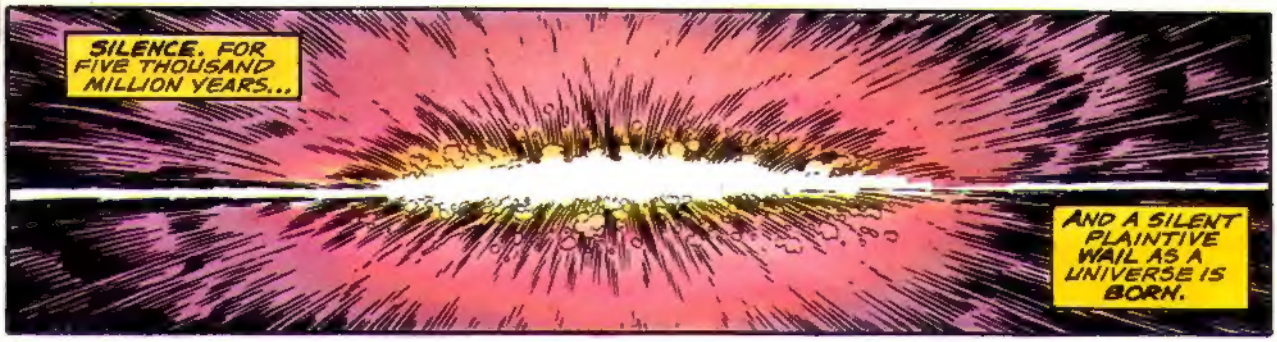
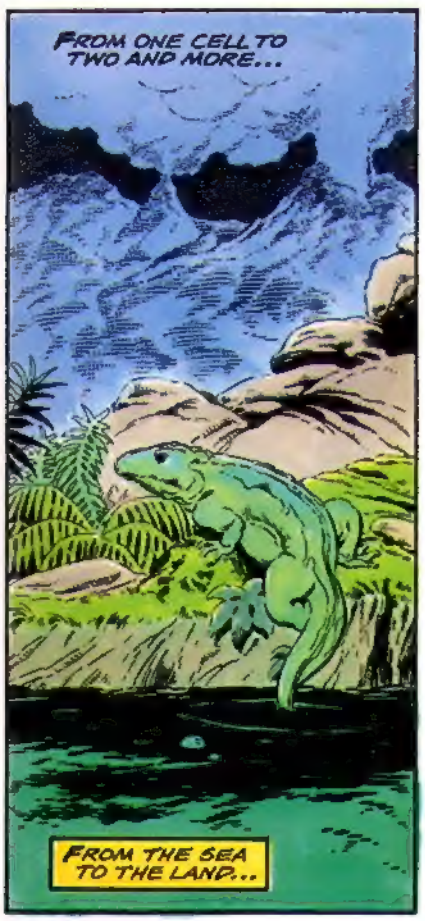

SILENCE. FOR FIVE THOUSAND MILLION YEARS...
AND A SILENT PLAINTIVE WAIL AS A UNIVERSE IS BORN.

FIVE HUNDRED MILLION YEARS AGO...
A SECOND, PAINFUL MOAN AS A PLANETARY SYSTEM IS DISGORGED INTO THE COLD.

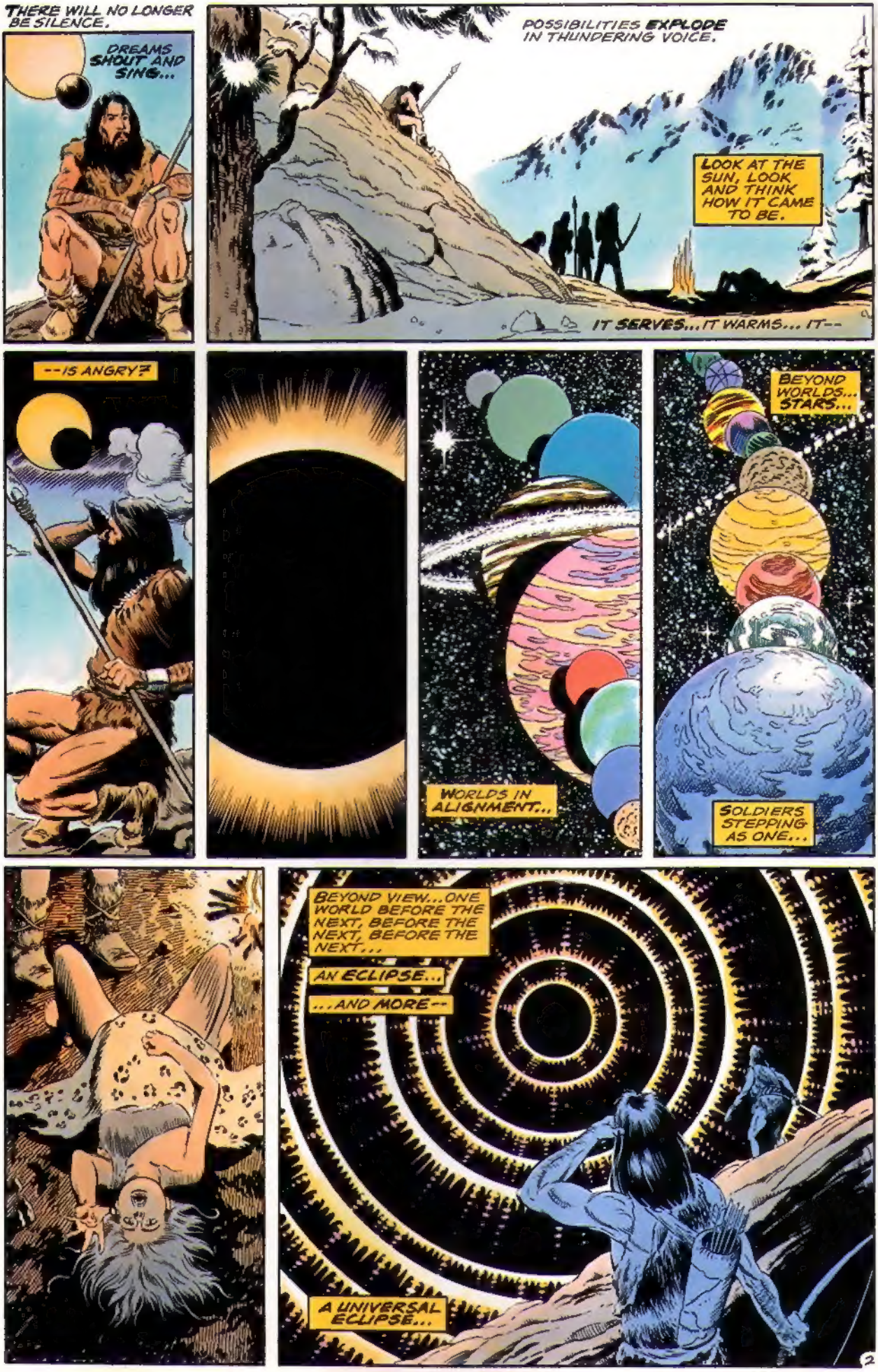
THE EARTH'S BLOOD THICKENS AND HARDENS.
FLESH SCABS OVER BURNING WOUNDS.

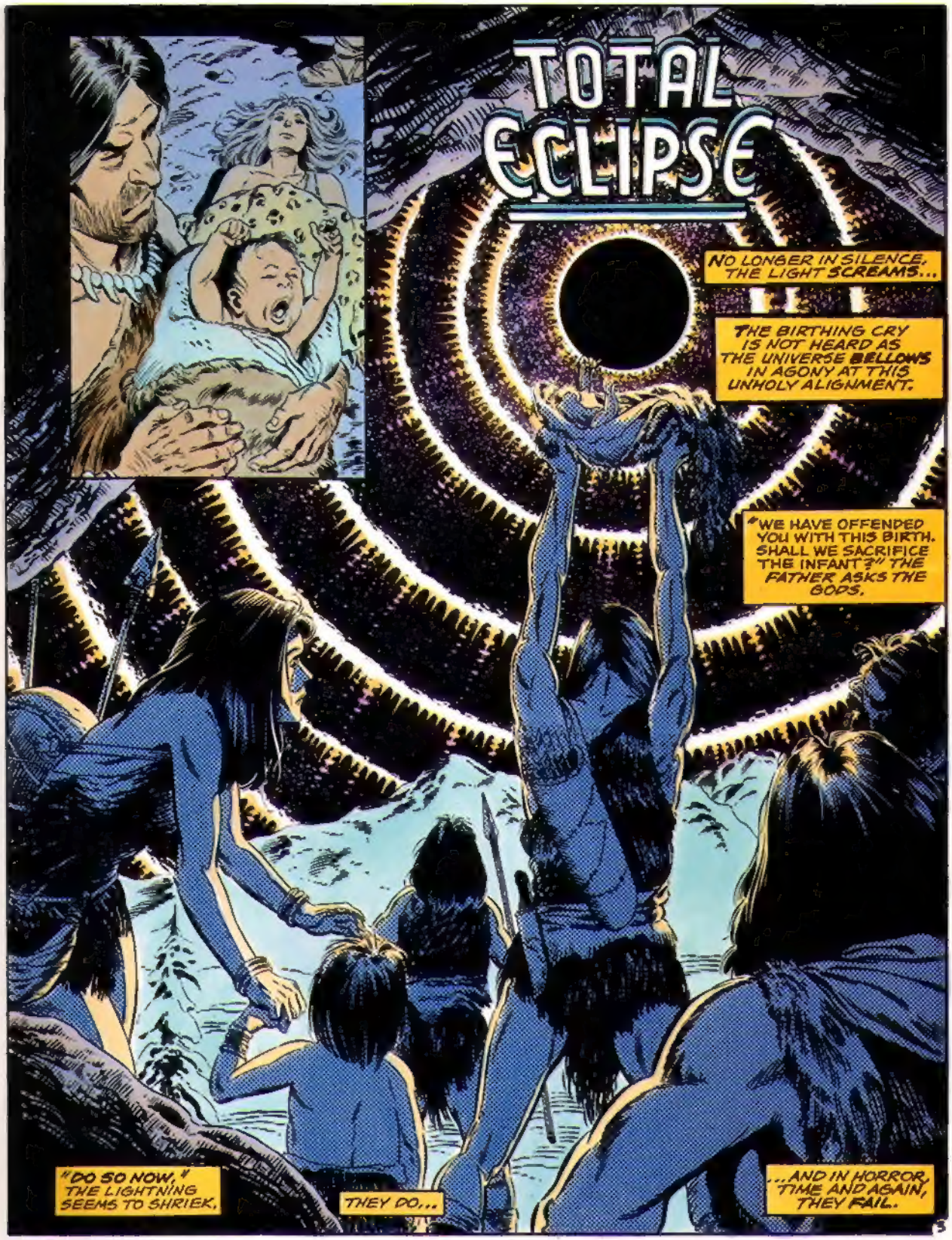
FOR FAR TOO LONG THERE DWELLS SILENCE.
THEN COMES THE FIRST SCREAM OF NEW LIFE.


FROM ONE CELL TO TWO AND MORE...
FROM THE SEA TO THE LAND...

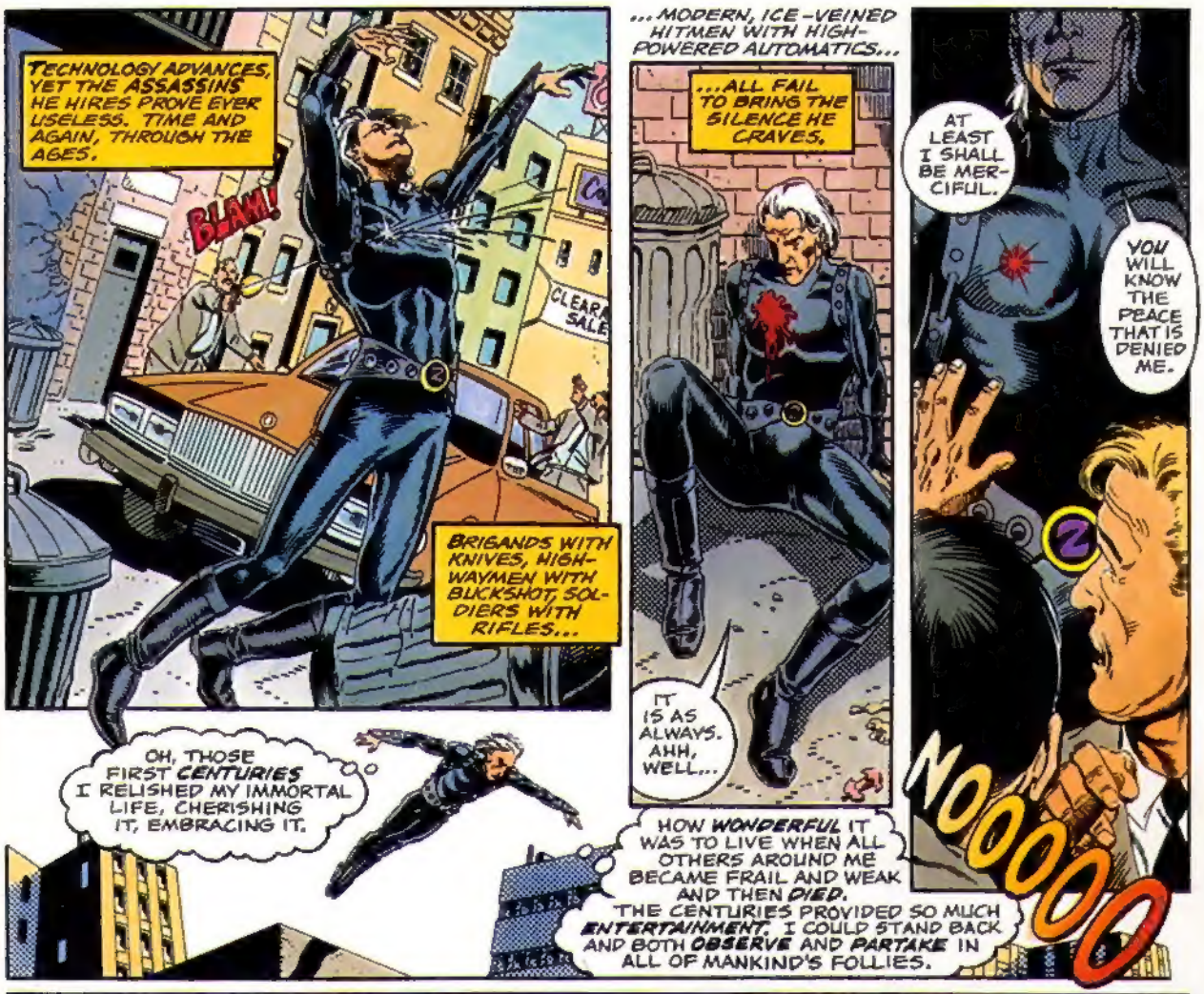
...AND ABOVE.
FROM THE BEHEMOTH...

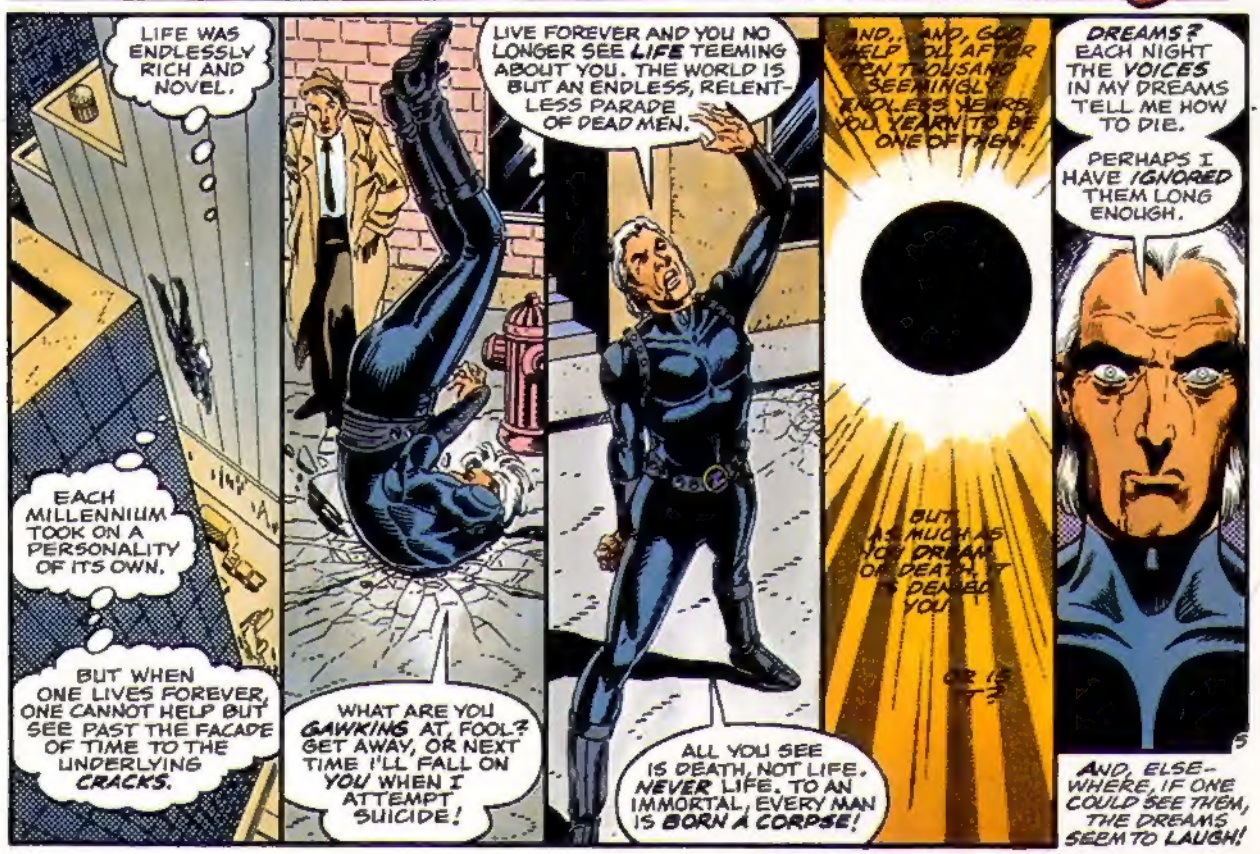
...TO THE FIRST SLOW SPARK OF THOUGHT.

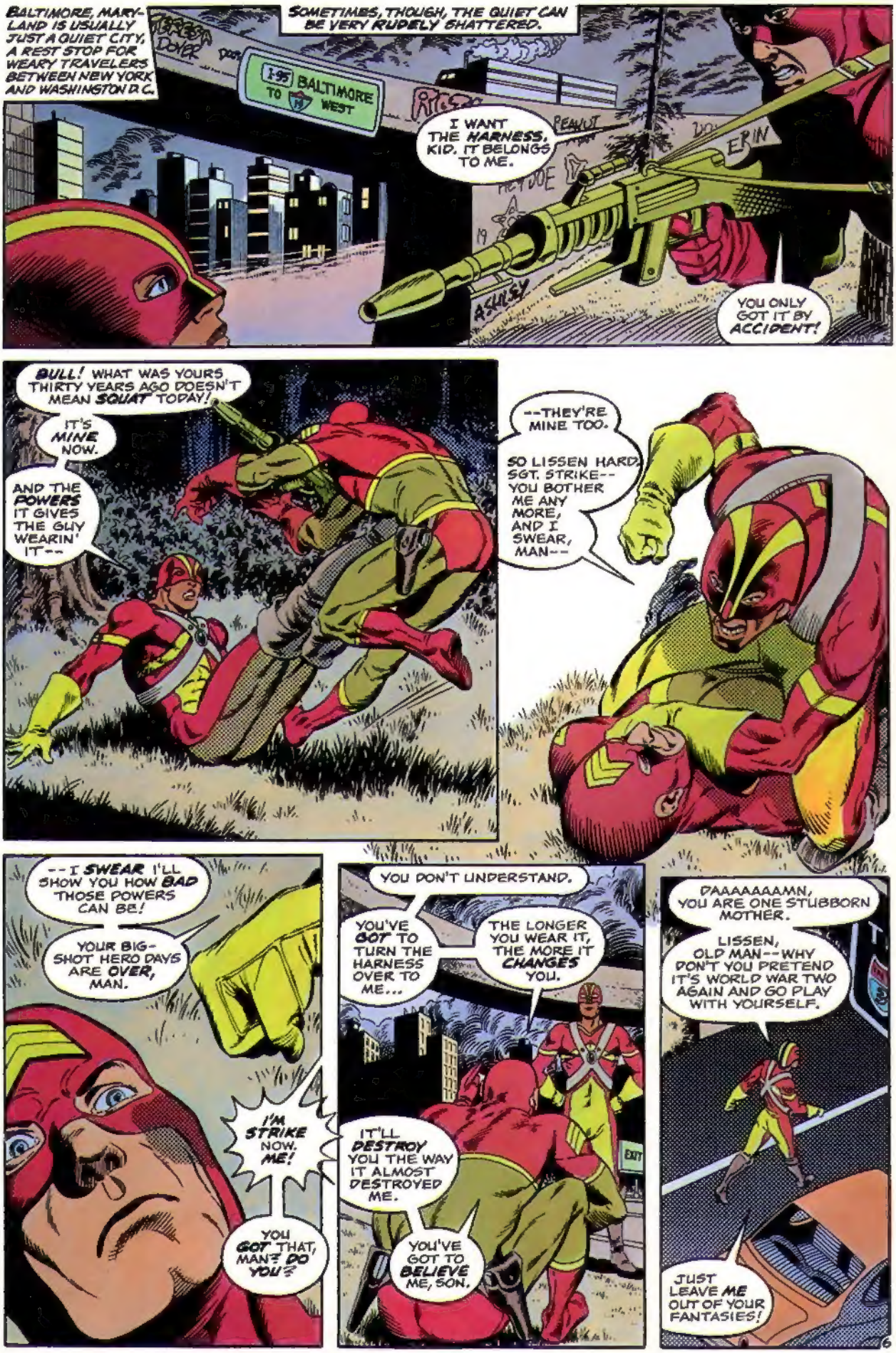

THERE WILL NO LONGER BE SILENCE.
DREAMS SHOUT AND SING...
POSSIBILITIES EXPLODE IN THUNDERING VOICE.
LOOK AT THE SUN, LOOK AND THINK HOW IT CAME TO BE.
IT SERVES... IT WARMS... IT--
--IS ANGRY?
WORLDS IN ALIGNMENT...
BEYOND WORLDS... STARS...
SOLDIERS STEPPING AS ONE...
BEYOND VIEW...ONE WORLD BEFORE THE NEXT, BEFORE THE NEXT, BEFORE THE NEXT...
AN ECLIPSE...
...AND MORE--
A UNIVERSAL ECLIPSE...
2

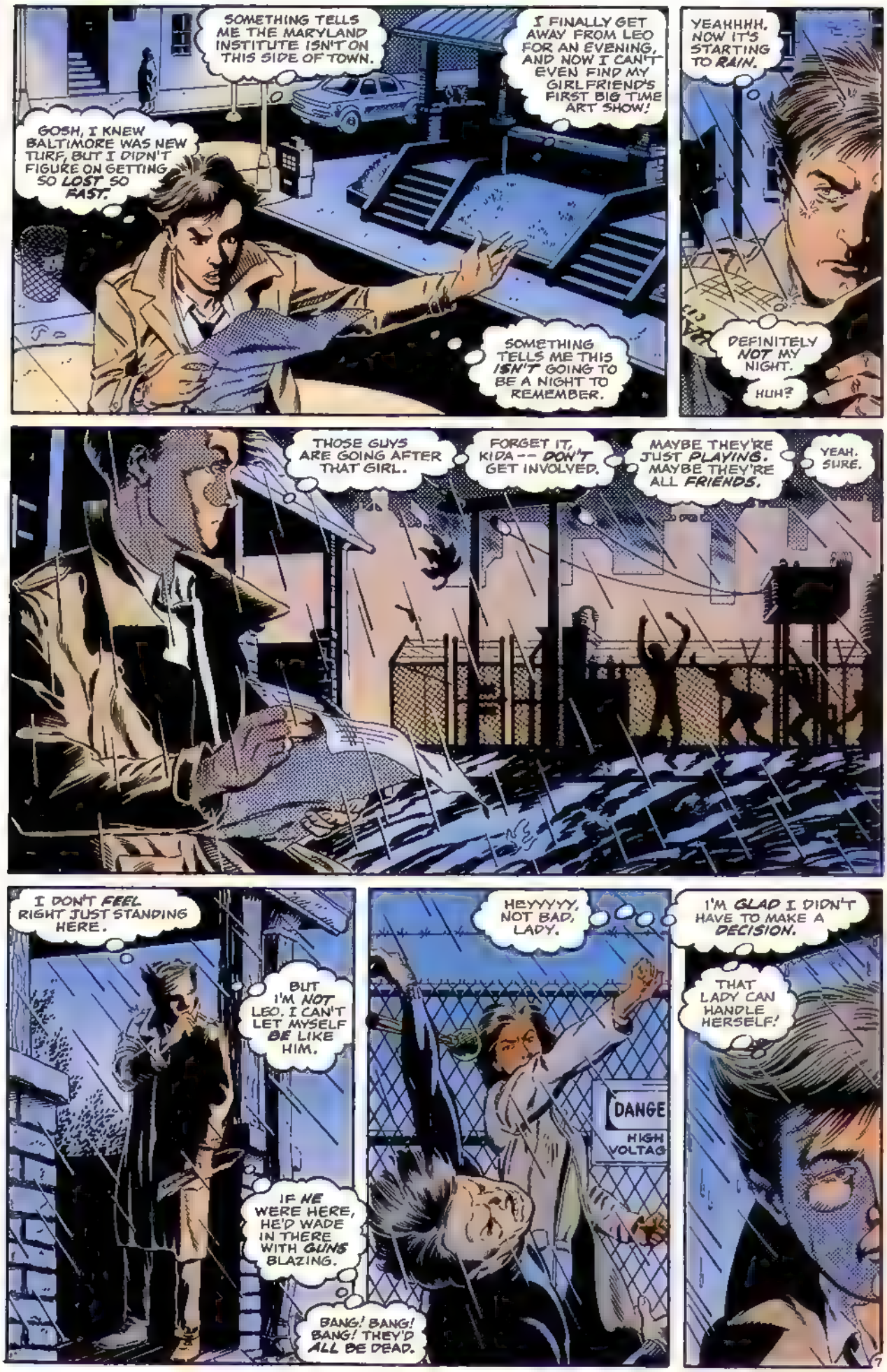

TOTAL ECLIPSE
NO LONGER IN SILENCE, THE LIGHT SCREAMS...
THE BIRTHING CRY IS NOT HEARD AS THE UNIVERSE BELLOWS IN AGONY AT THIS UNHOLY ALIGNMENT.
"WE HAVE OFFENDED YOU WITH THIS BIRTH. SHALL WE SACRIFICE THE INFANT?" THE FATHER ASKS THE GODS.
"DO SO NOW," THE LIGHTNING SEEMS TO SHRIEK.
THEY DO...
...AND IN HORROR, TIME AND AGAIN, THEY FAIL.

HE WILL NOT DIE.
HE CAN NOT DIE.
PLANETS IN ALIGNMENT... STARS IN ALIGNMENT...
...CENTURIES PASS BY, ONE AFTER THE OTHER AFTER THE OTHER...
UNTIL THERE IS NO DREAM TO SHOUT OR SING.
AND THE ONLY HOPE THAT SPARKS SOME FAR-DISTANT LIGHT--
--IS SILENCE.


TECHNOLOGY ADVANCES, YET THE ASSASSINS HE HIRES PROVE EVER USELESS. TIME AND AGAIN, THROUGH THE AGES.
BLAM!
BRIGANDS WITH KNIVES, HIGHWAYMEN WITH BUCKSHOT, SOLDIERS WITH RIFLES...
...MODERN, ICE-VEINED HITMEN WITH HIGH-POWERED AUTOMATICS...
...ALL FAIL TO BRING THE SILENCE HE CRAVES.
IT IS AS ALWAYS. AHH, WELL...
AT LEAST I SHALL BE MERCIFUL.
YOU WILL KNOW THE PEACE THAT IS DENIED ME.
NOOOOO
OH, THOSE FIRST CENTURIES I RELISHED MY IMMORTAL LIFE, CHERISHING IT, EMBRACING IT.
HOW WONDERFUL IT WAS TO LIVE WHEN ALL OTHERS AROUND ME BECAME FRAIL AND WEAK AND THEN DIED. THE CENTURIES PROVIDED SO MUCH ENTERTAINMENT. I COULD STAND BACK AND BOTH OBSERVE AND PARTAKE IN ALL OF MANKIND'S FOLLIES.


LIFE WAS ENDLESSLY RICH AND NOVEL.
EACH MILLENNIUM TOOK ON A PERSONALITY OF ITS OWN.
BUT WHEN ONE LIVES FOREVER, ONE CANNOT HELP BUT SEE PAST THE FACADE OF TIME TO THE UNDERLYING CRACKS.
WHAT ARE YOU GAWKING AT, FOOL? GET AWAY, OR NEXT TIME I'LL FALL ON YOU WHEN I ATTEMPT SUICIDE!
LIVE FOREVER AND YOU NO LONGER SEE LIFE TEEMING ABOUT YOU. THE WORLD IS BUT AN ENDLESS, RELENTLESS PARADE OF DEAD MEN.
ALL YOU SEE IS DEATH, NOT LIFE. NEVER LIFE. TO AN IMMORTAL, EVERY MAN IS BORN A CORPSE!
AND... AND, GOD HELP YOU AFTER TEN THOUSAND SEEMINGLY ENDLESS YEARS, YOU YEARN TO BE ONE OF THEM.
BUT AS MUCH AS YOU DREAM OF DEATH, IT IS DENIED YOU.
OR IS IT?
DREAMS? EACH NIGHT THE VOICES IN MY DREAMS TELL ME HOW TO DIE.
PERHAPS I HAVE IGNORED THEM LONG ENOUGH.
AND, ELSEWHERE, IF ONE COULD SEE THEM, THE DREAMS SEEM TO LAUGH!


BALTIMORE, MARYLAND IS USUALLY JUST A QUIET CITY, A REST STOP FOR WEARY TRAVELERS BETWEEN NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON D.C.
SOMETIMES, THOUGH, THE QUIET CAN BE VERY RUDELY SHATTERED.
I-95 TO BALTIMORE WEST
I WANT THE HARNESS, KID. IT BELONGS TO ME.
YOU ONLY GOT IT BY ACCIDENT!
BULL! WHAT WAS YOURS THIRTY YEARS AGO DOESN'T MEAN SQUAT TODAY!
IT'S MINE NOW.
AND THE POWERS IT GIVES THE GUY WEARIN' IT--
--THEY'RE MINE TOO.
SO LISSEN HARD, SGT. STRIKE-- YOU BOTHER ME ANY MORE, AND I SWEAR, MAN--
--I SWEAR I'LL SHOW YOU HOW BAD THOSE POWERS CAN BE!
YOUR BIG-SHOT HERO DAYS ARE OVER, MAN.
I'M STRIKE NOW, ME!
YOU GOT THAT, MAN? DO YOU?
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND.
YOU'VE GOT TO TURN THE HARNESS OVER TO ME...
THE LONGER YOU WEAR IT, THE MORE IT CHANGES YOU.
IT'LL DESTROY YOU THE WAY IT ALMOST DESTROYED ME.
YOU'VE GOT TO BELIEVE ME, SON.
EXIT
DAAAAAAAMN, YOU ARE ONE STUBBORN MOTHER.
LISSEN, OLD MAN--WHY DON'T YOU PRETEND IT'S WORLD WAR TWO AGAIN AND GO PLAY WITH YOURSELF.
JUST LEAVE ME OUT OF YOUR FANTASIES!


SOMETHING TELLS ME THE MARYLAND INSTITUTE ISN'T ON THIS SIDE OF TOWN.
I FINALLY GET AWAY FROM LEO FOR AN EVENING, AND NOW I CAN'T EVEN FIND MY GIRLFRIEND'S FIRST BIG TIME ART SHOW!
GOSH, I KNEW BALTIMORE WAS NEW TURF, BUT I DIDN'T FIGURE ON GETTING SO LOST SO FAST.
SOMETHING TELLS ME THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE A NIGHT TO REMEMBER.
YEAHHHH, NOW IT'S STARTING TO RAIN.
DEFINITELY NOT MY NIGHT.
HUH?
THOSE GUYS ARE GOING AFTER THAT GIRL.
FORGET IT, KIDA -- DON'T GET INVOLVED.
MAYBE THEY'RE JUST PLAYING. MAYBE THEY'RE ALL FRIENDS.
YEAH. SURE.
I DON'T FEEL RIGHT JUST STANDING HERE.
BUT I'M NOT LEO. I CAN'T LET MYSELF BE LIKE HIM.
IF HE WERE HERE, HE'D WADE IN THERE WITH GUNS BLAZING.
BANG! BANG! BANG! THEY'D ALL BE DEAD.
HEYYYYY, NOT BAD, LADY.
DANGE
HIGH VOLTAG
I'M GLAD I DIDN'T HAVE TO MAKE A DECISION.
THAT LADY CAN HANDLE HERSELF!

I DON'T KNOW WHO YOU BOYS ARE, BUT YOU PICKED ON THE WRONG GIRL.
I SUGGEST YOU GET BACK--
--OR MY NEXT SHOT WON'T BE HIGH.
WE HAVE OUR MISSION, BLACK ANGEL--
Sherlock's
PASSING
2:12 WHAT-- WHAT IS THAT?
--WE NEED YOU!
OKAY, LEO, WHEREVER YOU ARE-- YOU WIN!
THOSE GUYS AREN'T ORDINARY MUGGERS.
SO MAYBE THE PROWLER IS NEEDED.
WE GOT WHAT WE CAME FOR.
LET'S GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE.
WHAP!
GOD, I HATE THIS. I HATE PLAYING HERO WHEN I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHAT THE GAME IS.
I KNOW I WANT TO HELP, BUT I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS THE WAY.
WHY DID YOU HAVE TO TAKE ME UNDER YOUR WING, LEO? WHY?

I WAS JUST AN ART STUDENT, MINDING MY OWN BUSINESS. I DIDN'T ASK TO BE AN APPRENTICE VIGILANTE.
I'M NOT LIKE SUPERMAN, LEO. I'LL BLEED ALL OVER THE STREET IF THIS CONTINUES.
HELL, I'LL BE HAPPY IF ALL I DO IS BLEED.
BOF!
THESE GUYS LOOK LIKE THEY WANT TO DO SOMETHING MORE PERMANENT!
WHO ARE THEY, ANYWAY?
THEY LOOK LIKE REGULAR PEOPLE, BUT THEY'RE DEFINITELY NOT.
THREE AGAINST ONE. REALLY WONDERFUL.
WELL, LEO ALWAYS SAYS I SHOULD TAKE THE OFFENSIVE!
DON'T SIT BACK, HE SAYS. GET IN THERE-- TAKE CHARGE!
I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY WITH ME NOW, LEO.
OH, MY GOD-- DID I DO THAT?
SIZZLEEE
THE WHOLE CITY'S BLACKING OUT!

MAN, I COULDN'T BELIEVE THAT OLD FART KEPT INSISTING I GIVE HIM BACK THE HARNESS.
YOU'RE GONE MONTHS BUT SOME THINGS DON'T CHANGE. I MEAN, YOU KNOW THE HARNESS WAS HIS, DENNIS.
YEAH, BOBBY-- IT WAS HIS. NOW IT'S MINE!
I'VE RISKED EVERYTHING-- EVEN MY MOM'S LIFE--PROTECTING THAT POWER HARNESS.
I'VE EARNED THE RIGHT TO WEAR IT... AND I'M NOT GONNA GIVE IT UP NOW!
HEY, WHAT NOW? THE LIGHTS ARE OFF.
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED? DIDN'T THE GYM PAY ITS ELECTRIC BILL?
NO, TAKE A LOOK-- IT'S ALL OVER TOWN.
THE LIGHTS KEEP FLICKERING ON AND OFF.
SOME-THING'S WRONG!
YOU SEE, MAN-- THIS IS WHY I NEED THE HARNESS AND ITS POWERS.
WHEN THINGS GO CRAZY, I CAN BECOME STRIKE AND SAVE THE DAY...
EXCEPT THAT WHAT SGT. STRIKE SAID MAY BE TRUE, DENNIS. THE HARNESS IS CHANGING YOU...
...AND NOT FOR THE BETTER.

THE TOWN OF TAILSMITH, GEORGIA...
DEVILWING ONE TO DEVILWING TWO--
BD-D-D-DAMN!
DINER
AIR-CONDITIONED
MOON'S GEED
NO WAY, MAN--EVER SINCE 'NAM, YOU ALWAYS HOGGED THE BIG FUN.
--YOU TAKE THE FREAKIN' SIDE STREETS, MAN, I WANT THE MAIN DRAG FOR MYSELF.
BAP!
BAP!
BRAT-TAT
U.S
FOR ONCE IT'S GONNA BE MY TURN TO PLAY THE HICKS.
C'MON, YOU STUPID JERKS--LET'S SEE YOU DANCE!
LOOKIT 'EM, MAN. THEY ALWAYS RUN.
HELL, THIS TOWN'S GONNA BE A DOWNER.
TOO EASY...TOO FREAKIN' EASY.
MEBBE NOT. LOOKIT THERE.
THEY THINK THEY GOT THEMSELVES A FREAKIN' HERO.
PULL 'ER LOW...
I WANNA CHECK THIS MUTT OUT MYSELF.
HELL, LOOKIT THAT HARDWARE HE'S LUGGIN'!
FAR FREAKIN' OUT, MAN!
TELEPH
CLEAR OFF, OLD MAN. AN' LEAVE THE 'ZOOKA WHEN YOU GO!
NO! THE VOICES SAID I NEED YOU.
BUT, IT APPEARS I MUST CONVINCE YOU THAT YOU NEED ME!

WE GOT OURSELVES TARGET PRACTICE, BOYS.
DO IT!
H-HE'S JUST STANDING THERE!
RAISE HELL
BAM!
BAM!
BAM!
BAM!
WE GOTTA BE MISSING!
THAK!
FREAKIN' OLD MAN'S LAUGHING AT US!
NOBODY LAUGHS AT THE DEVILWINGS! NOBODY!
BLAST 'IM TO HELL!
KA-WHAMMO
OH, MY GOD--
--H-HE WAS TRYING TO SAVE US...
...AND THEY JUST BLEW HIM UP!
BUT AN IMMORTAL...
...CANNOT DIE!
G-GAKKKK ...H-HE'S COMIN' TOGETHER AGAIN.
I-- I THINK I'M GONNA PUKE!
12

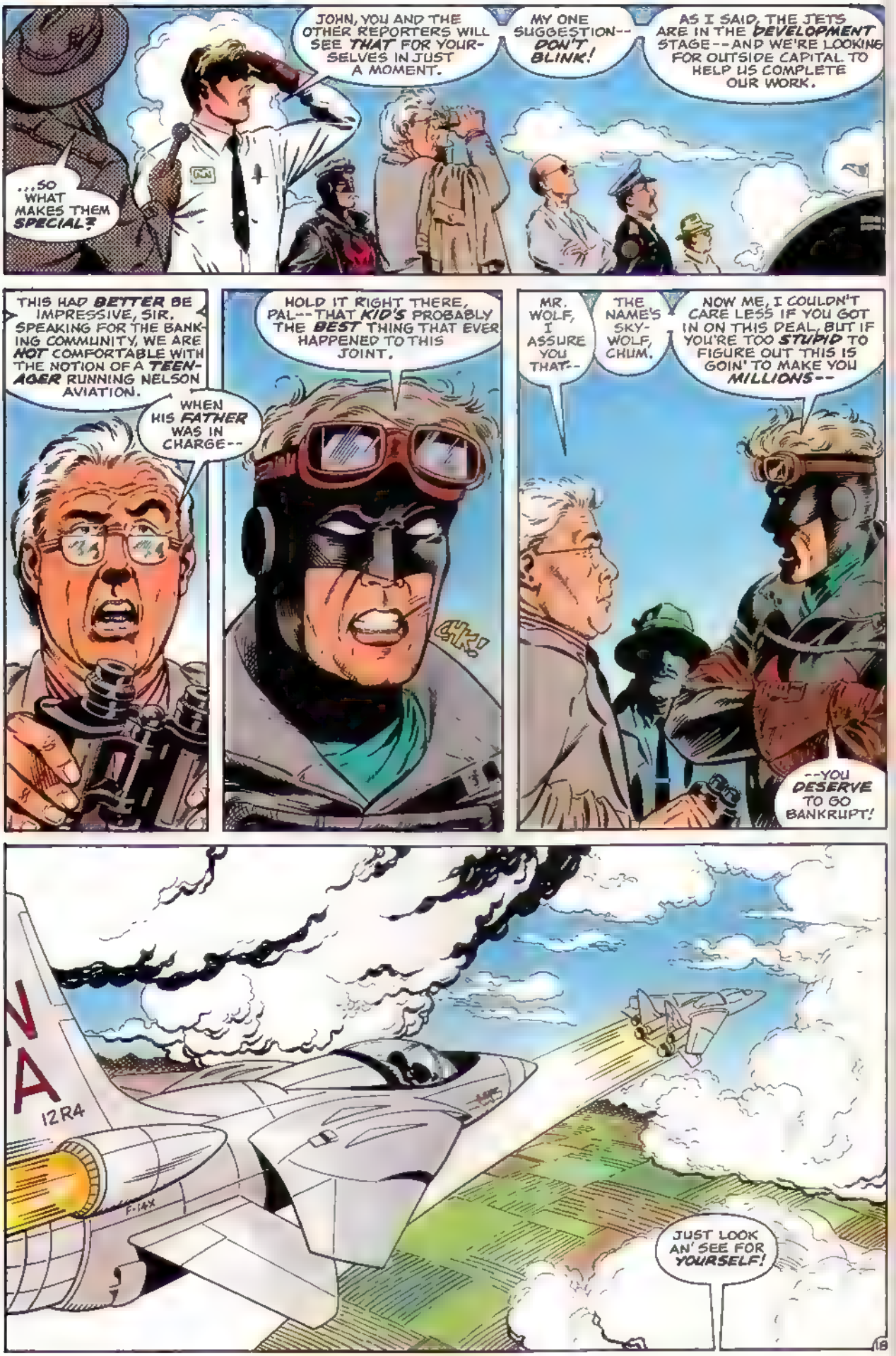
WHAT THE HELL, MAN?
YOU SURE YOU HIT HIM?
H-HIS ARMS AN' LEGS WERE EVERY-WHERE, MAN.
TH-THEY C-CRAWLED BACK TO HIM.
THIS AIN'T CANDID CAMERA, IS IT?
NOT EVEN DISSECTION WORKS. A PITY, THAT.
ACTUALLY, I'M RATHER ANNOYED THAT YOU FAILED.
YOUR SUCCESS WOULD HAVE SAVED US ALL A LOT OF TROUBLE.
YOU LOOK PUZZLED. SOME OF YOU LOOK SICK. I DON'T BLAME YOU.
NOT IN THE MOOD FOR HUMOR, ARE YOU, BOYS? VERY WELL.
PERHAPS THEN YOU WILL BE IN THE MOOD FOR A DEAL.
YOU SEE, I WAS COMING APART, BUT I PULLED MYSELF TOGETHER AGAIN.
YOU SEE, SONNY, AS MUCH AS I'D PREFER IT, I CANNOT BE KILLED.
ON THE OTHER HAND, I CAN EASILY SEND YOU TO HELL.
SO YOU RATHER CRUDE BOYS HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE.
BECOME MY LACKIES, SERVE ME AS I DEMAND--
--OR START PACKING FOR VERY WARM WEATHER.
UHHH... OKAY, OKAY, MAN...
SURE, SURE-- WHATEVER, YOU SAY.
GOOD. FRANKLY, I SUSPECTED YOU'D UNDERSTAND.
YOU BOYS ARE NOT NEARLY AS DUMB AS YOU LOOK.
THEN AGAIN, WHO COULD BE THAT DUMB!

LOOK, PAL, I DON'T CARE IF YOU ARE CAPTAIN GOODGUY OR WHATEVER YOU CALL YOURSELF-- YOU'RE NOT GOIN' IN.
THOSE MANIACS ARE IN THERE RIPPING THE WHOLE PLACE APART--
--AND NOBODY GOES IN UNTIL THE SWAT TEAM SHOWS! GOT THAT, PAL?
POLICE
NO, YOU LISTEN TO ME, "PAL!"-- I'M NEEDED HERE.
BUT MAYBE WHAT YOU NEED IS SOME PROOF!
CRASH!
BALTIMORE PD POLICE
KER-RUK
WELL?
BRUMF!
Y-YEAH, SURE-- YOU WANT IN, BE MY GUEST.
GO AHEAD AND HAVE YOUR STUPID HEAD SMASHED IN.
IT'S YOUR FUNERAL.
DON'T BUY FLOWERS YET, PAL.

I TRY TO SAVE THAT WOMAN AND I'M GETTING MY HEAD HANDED TO ME.
OOOF
THESE GUYS ARE TOO MUCH FOR ME.
GOOD TRY, KID--NOW LET THE PROS SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE.
HEY, I COULD'VE STOPPED THEM BY MYSELF!
THOK!
MEBBE--BUT HOW MANY ARMS AND LEGS WOULD YOU HAVE LEFT WHEN YOU'RE DONE?
UHNNNN!
THEY GOT HIM, WHOEVER HE IS.
THAT MEANS IT'S UP TO ME.
BUT IF HE COULDN'T STOP THEM WITH HIS POWERS, WHAT IN HELL CAN I DO?
LEO, WHY DIDN'T YOU JUST LEAVE ME ON THE STREETS WHERE YOU FOUND ME?
BOLT!
HUHR WH-WHAT ARE THOSE THINGS, ANYWAY?
YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT NOW, LADY.
JUST REMEMBER MY NAME WHEN YOU TELL THE REPORTERS WHO SAVED YOU.
IT'S STRIKE!--AND DON'T FORGET THE EXCLAMATION POINT!
BOLT!

SHE'S HEMORRHAGING. CALL AHEAD AND TELL THEM TO PREP--STAT!
SHE'S GOING TO NEED ALL THE HELP SHE CAN GET--AND AS FAST AS SHE CAN GET IT.
OKAY, HOTSHOT, I WANT YOU DOWNTOWN FOR QUESTIONING FIRST THING IN THE MORNING.
AND YOU BETTER GET YOURSELF A LAWYER.
DON'T PUSH ME AROUND, MAN--WITHOUT ME THIS WHOLE PLACE WOULD'VE BLOWN FROM HERE TO DC!
MAYBE, MAYBE NOT. SO WHERE'S YOUR SKINNY FRIEND? MAKE SURE HE SHOWS UP, TOO.
I WANT TO KNOW WHERE THOSE GUYS DISAPPEARED TO.
I WANT TO KNOW A LOT OF THINGS.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, OFFICER. HE MAY BE LOUD-MOUTHED, BUT HE MEANS WELL.
I'LL VOUCH FOR HIM.
I'M IMPRESSED.
AND WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
I WAS, UHH--A GOVERNMENT AGENT DURING WORLD WAR TWO. THEY CALLED ME SGT. STRIKE.
MISTER, I WASN'T EVEN BORN UNTIL THE MID-FIFTIES, SO THAT DOESN'T MEAN SQUAT TO ME.
JUST MAKE SURE YOU PEOPLE ARE DOWNTOWN TOMORROW.
GOD, WHAT'S THIS WORLD COMING TO?
PERVERTS DRESSED UP LIKE COMIC BOOK CHARACTERS!
JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT YOU'VE BEEN EVERYTHING!
POLICE

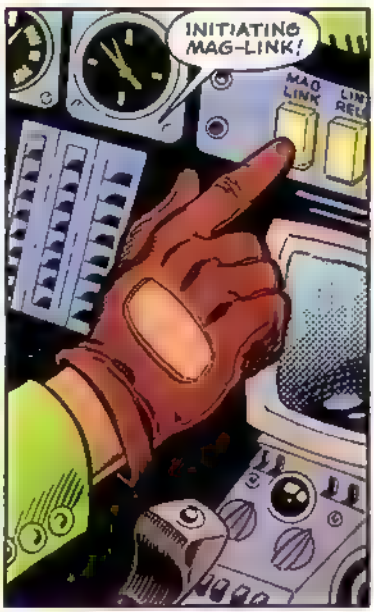
NOW YOU PROBABLY THINK I OWE YOU ONE.
FORGET IT-- I OWE YOU SPIT!
SO WHY DON'T YOU JUST GET THE HELL OUT WHILE I STILL LET YOU.
BECAUSE VERY SOON NOW YOU'RE GOING TO COME LOOKING FOR ME...
...AND YOU'LL BEG ME TO TAKE THE HARNESS.
DON'T HOLD YOUR BREATH, SARGE. I'LL--
UHHHH, WILL SOMEONE TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON?
I FEEL LIKE I CAME IN IN THE MIDDLE OF A GODARD MOVIE.
WHO ARE YOU, KID, AND WHERE'D YOU DISAPPEAR TO?
I, UHH-- WAS JUST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHEN--
THIS IS SOME DAMN FREAKY NEIGHBORHOOD, MAN.
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND YOU MEDIA GUYS HERE TO RECORD THIS EVENT, THESE ARE THE JETS WE CALLED YOU HERE TO SEE...
...NELSON AVIATION'S HOTTEST DEVELOPMENT.
NELSON AVIATION
THEY LOOK RATHER ORDINARY TO ME, MR. MANSFIELD...
17


...SO WHAT MAKES THEM SPECIAL?
JOHN, YOU AND THE OTHER REPORTERS WILL SEE THAT FOR YOURSELVES IN JUST A MOMENT.
MY ONE SUGGESTION-- DON'T BLINK!
AS I SAID, THE JETS ARE IN THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE--AND WE'RE LOOKING FOR OUTSIDE CAPITAL TO HELP US COMPLETE OUR WORK.
THIS HAD BETTER BE IMPRESSIVE, SIR. SPEAKING FOR THE BANKING COMMUNITY, WE ARE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THE NOTION OF A TEENAGER RUNNING NELSON AVIATION.
WHEN HIS FATHER WAS IN CHARGE--
HOLD IT RIGHT THERE, PAL--THAT KID'S PROBABLY THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO THIS JOINT.
CHK!
MR. WOLF, I ASSURE YOU THAT--
THE NAME'S SKY-WOLF, CHUM.
NOW ME, I COULDN'T CARE LESS IF YOU GOT IN ON THIS DEAL, BUT IF YOU'RE TOO STUPID TO FIGURE OUT THIS IS GOIN' TO MAKE YOU MILLIONS--
--YOU DESERVE TO GO BANKRUPT!
12R4
F-14X
JUST LOOK AN' SEE FOR YOURSELF!

THOSE TWO BABIES RIDE LIKE A WHISPER. THE OPERATION'S SMOOTH-- TAKES MACH-5 LIKE A MERCEDES DOIN' 30.
BUT THE INDIVIDUAL RIDE'S ONLY PART OF IT.
WHAT YOU'RE GOIN' TO SEE NEXT IS REVOLUTIONARY! IT'LL CURL YOUR HAIR!

YOU READY, VAL?
I CAN'T WAIT, DAVY.

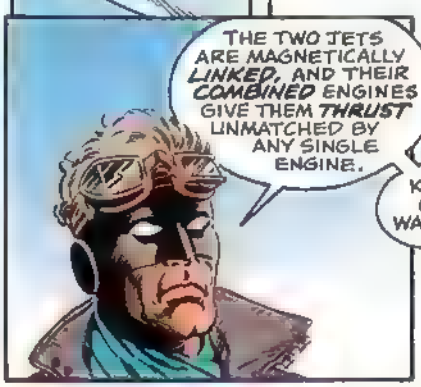
LET'S DO IT!

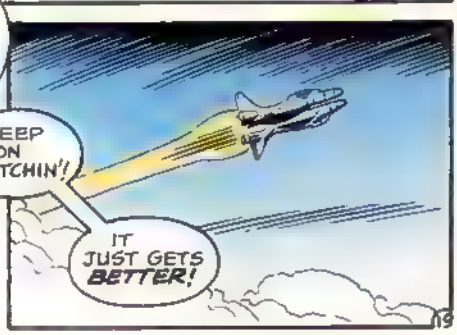

INITIATING MAG-LINK!
MAG LINK

COPY, VAL.
I'M BEGINNING MY ROTATION NOW!

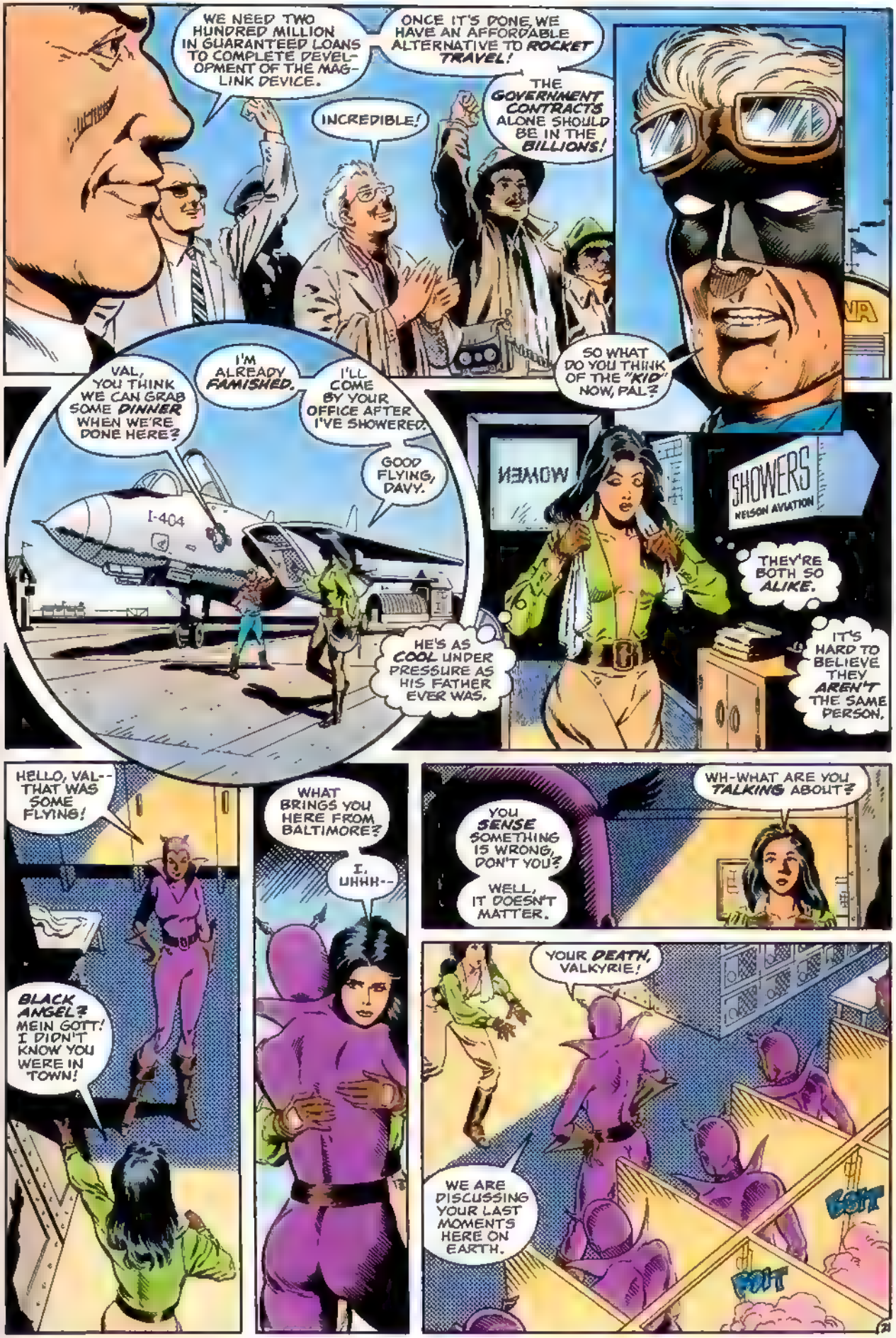
GET READY FOR LINKAGE!

PERFECT, DAVY-- JUST PERFECT!
SECURE LINKAGE... PREPARE FOR MAXIMUM THRUST!
CLICK
AT THE ZERO COUNT, VAL. 10-9-8-


THE TWO JETS ARE MAGNETICALLY LINKED, AND THEIR COMBINED ENGINES GIVE THEM THRUST UNMATCHED BY ANY SINGLE ENGINE.


KEEP ON WATCHIN'!
IT JUST GETS BETTER!

DAVY-- IT'S STARTING TO SHAKE AGAIN--
--JUST AS ALWAYS!
KEEP HOLDING 'ER STEADY, VAL...
IF WE'RE EVER GOING TO HAVE A SOLID RUN, THIS HAS GOT TO BE IT!
HOLD AS LONG AS YOU CAN!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WE ALREADY TOLD YOU--THOSE PLANES ARE PROTOTYPES!
WE CAN'T KEEP THE MAG-LINK STEADY OVER MACH-7.
WHY DO YOU THINK WE'RE LOOKIN' FOR MONEY?
ARE THEY IN TROUBLE?
YOU ALWAYS ASK DUMB-ASS QUESTIONS?
DAVY, I CAN'T KEEP HOLDING HER ON COURSE.
FUSELAGE IS CRACKING.
DAMN... I KEPT HOPING...
OKAY, OKAY-
MAG. LINK LINK RELEASE
--ACTIVATE LINK RELEASE...
...AND I'LL MEET YOU ON THE GROUND.
GOOD FLYING, VAL.
WE DID OUR BEST!
WHEN THAT BABY'S PERFECTED, WE'RE TALKIN' JETS LINKIN' WITH SPACE STATIONS.
LIKE I SAID-- "REVOLUTIONARY!"

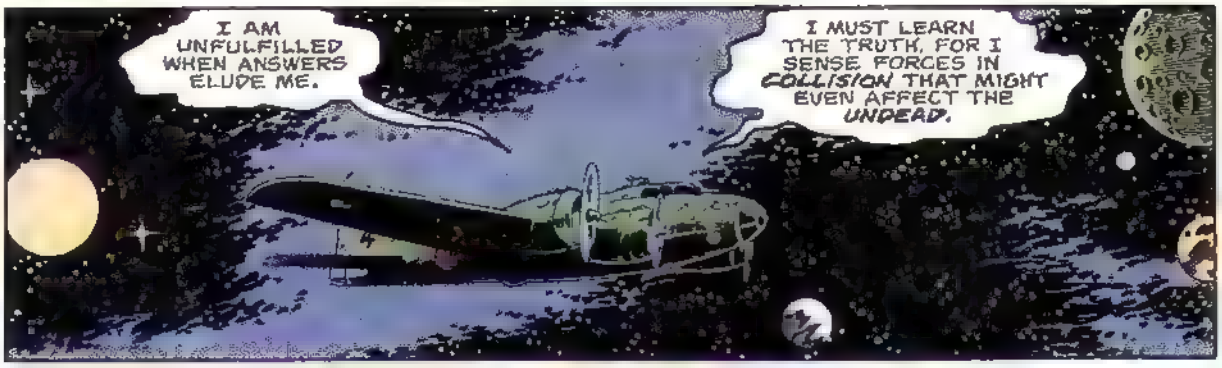

WE NEED TWO HUNDRED MILLION IN GUARANTEED LOANS TO COMPLETE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MAG-LINK DEVICE.
ONCE IT'S DONE, WE HAVE AN AFFORDABLE ALTERNATIVE TO ROCKET TRAVEL!
INCREDIBLE!
THE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS ALONE SHOULD BE IN THE BILLIONS!
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE "KID" NOW, PAL?
VAL, YOU THINK WE CAN GRAB SOME DINNER WHEN WE'RE DONE HERE?
I'M ALREADY FAMISHED.
I'LL COME BY YOUR OFFICE AFTER I'VE SHOWERED.
GOOD FLYING, DAVY.
I-404
HE'S AS COOL UNDER PRESSURE AS HIS FATHER EVER WAS.
WOMEN
SHOWERS
NELSON AVIATION
THEY'RE BOTH SO ALIKE.
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THEY AREN'T THE SAME PERSON.
HELLO, VAL-- THAT WAS SOME FLYING!
BLACK ANGEL? MEIN GOTT! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN TOWN!
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE FROM BALTIMORE?
I, UHHH--
YOU SENSE SOMETHING IS WRONG, DON'T YOU?
WELL, IT DOESN'T MATTER.
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOUR DEATH, VALKYRIE!
WE ARE DISCUSSING YOUR LAST MOMENTS HERE ON EARTH.
CUT
CUT

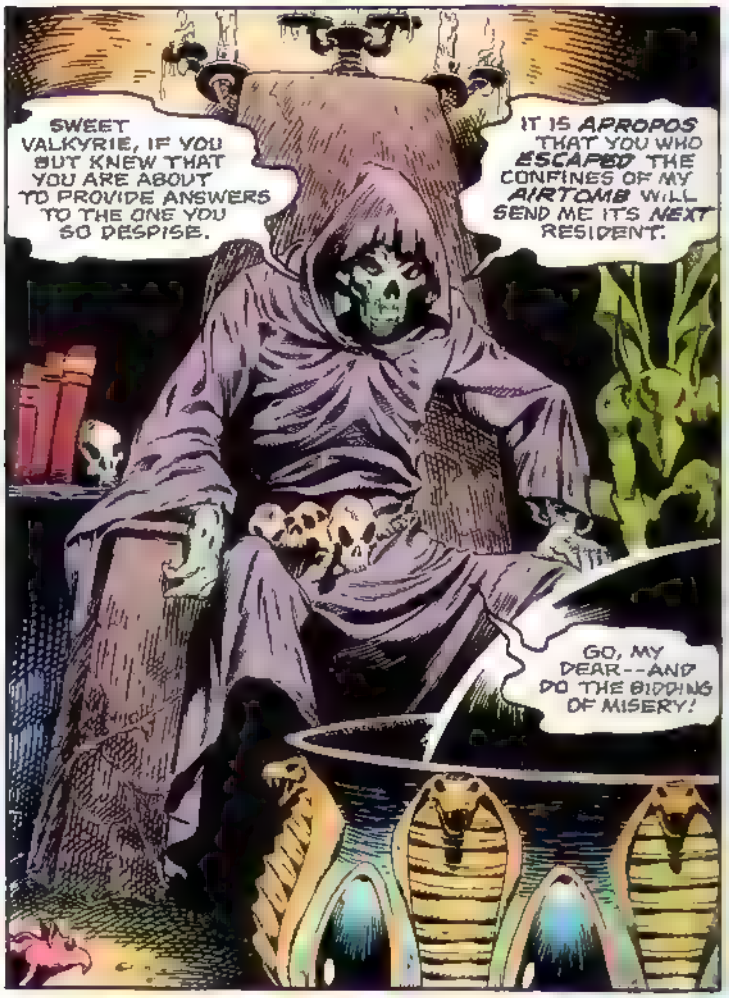
ZUM TEUFEL!!
NOT THE DEVIL, VALKYRIE--
--ALTHOUGH YOU ARE CERTAINLY GOING TO HELL!
WELL, IT MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A PERFECT FLIGHT, BUT IT SURE DOES BEAT THAT ZEPHYR ROBOT PLANE FIASCO!
YEAH, A PLANE WITHOUT A PILOT AIN'T A PLANE!
NOTE: SEE AIRBOY #39 FOR DETAILS! --FRED
DAVY? DAVY!!
THAT'S VAL!
SOME-THING'S WRONG!
YOU SURE YOU NEED ME, KID?
WHAT IF SHE JUST WANTS YOU?
YEAH, MAYBE SHE DOES--
-- BUT FOR WHAT?
VAL?!?
WOK!
PUD!
THEY SUDDENLY APPEARED-- OUT OF NOWHERE!
TOO MANY PESTS FOR ME TO SWAT ALONE.
I COULD USE A HAND!
22

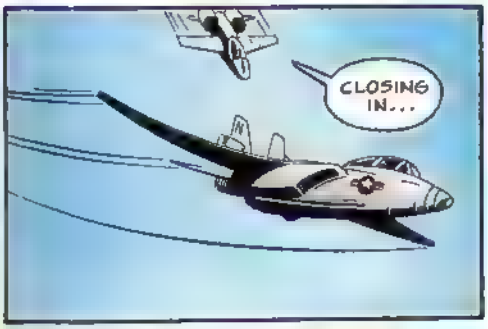
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, DAVY?
GIVE ME A HAND HERE!
HOLY HELL! WHAT IS THIS-- A SISTER ACT?
FWAK!
UH UNH, BABE--
--I LIKE MY FRIEND'S SKULL JUST THE WAY IT IS-- WITHOUT AN EXTRA-ADDED CREASE DOWN THE MIDDLE.
N60C
MOVE IN-- AND YOU KNOW WHAT WE WANT.
WILSON AVIATION
LET NOTHING STAND IN YOUR WAY!

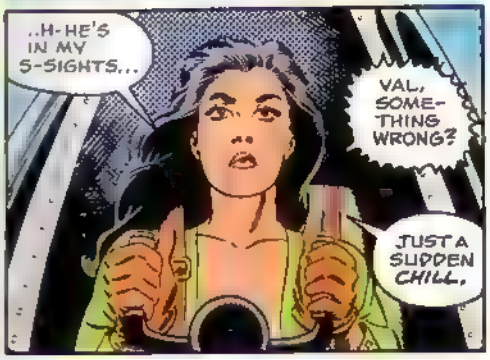
YEAH, THIS'S A SNAP, MAN--
--LIKE SHOOTIN' KIDS IN A CANDY STORE!
BDAM!
UHA!!
HURRY! WE NEED THE JETS!
GET INTO PLACE, EVERYONE!
MOVE IT--- NOW!!!
WHAT THE HELL--?
ALL RIGHT-- NOW WE KNOW FOR A FACT THAT SOMETHING WEIRD IS GOING ON.
THE QUESTION IS WHAT? AND WHO'S BEHIND IT?
MEIN GOTT!
BOTT!
BOTT!
SKKRRRRR
JETS?
I KNOW THE WHINE OF THOSE ENGINES AS WELL AS I DO BIRDIE.
C'MON!
THEY GOT THE DAMN PROTO-TYPES!
THEN THE FIGHT WAS A RUSE--A WAY TO KEEP US BUSY.
MACH SHNELL! THEY HAVEN'T ESCAPED US, YET.

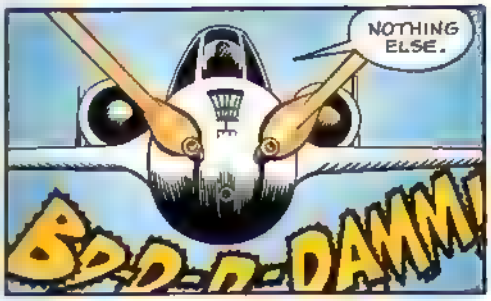
THEY PROBABLY DON'T KNOW HOW TO CUT IN THE HI-SPEEDS!
WE CAN CATCH UP TO THEM.
I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHO THEY ARE--
--AND HOW DID THEY PULL THAT DISAPPEARING ACT?!
I HATE MYSTERIES.
LET'S KICK ASS!
I'LL HEAD FOR THE JETS... YOU RUN INTER-FERENCE.
WHY DO YOU GET ALL THE FUN?
PTANG!
AGE BEFORE BEAUTY.
OHHHHHH-- I DON'T THINK THAT'S HOW IT WORKS, BUT WHAT THE HELL.
MOVE IN-- AND TAKE 'EM!
BAM BAM BAM
YESSSS, I THOUGHT SO...
...SOMETHING IS DEFINITELY AMISS!

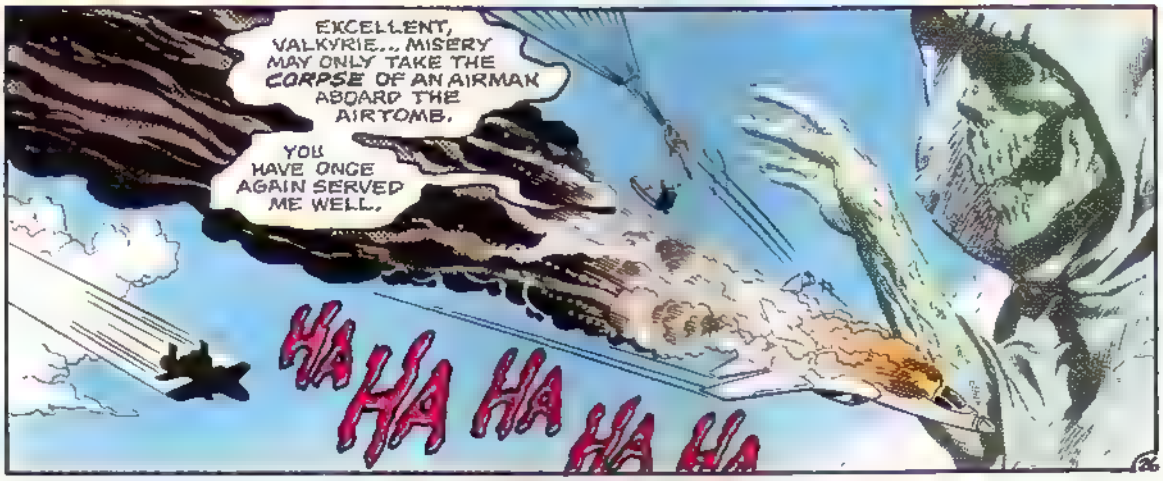

I AM UNFULFILLED WHEN ANSWERS ELUDE ME.
I MUST LEARN THE TRUTH, FOR I SENSE FORCES IN COLLISION THAT MIGHT EVEN AFFECT THE UNDEAD.


SWEET VALKYRIE, IF YOU BUT KNEW THAT YOU ARE ABOUT TO PROVIDE ANSWERS TO THE ONE YOU SO DESPISE.
IT IS APROPOS THAT YOU WHO ESCAPED THE CONFINES OF MY AIRTOMB WILL SEND ME ITS NEXT RESIDENT.
GO, MY DEAR--AND DO THE BIDDING OF MISERY!

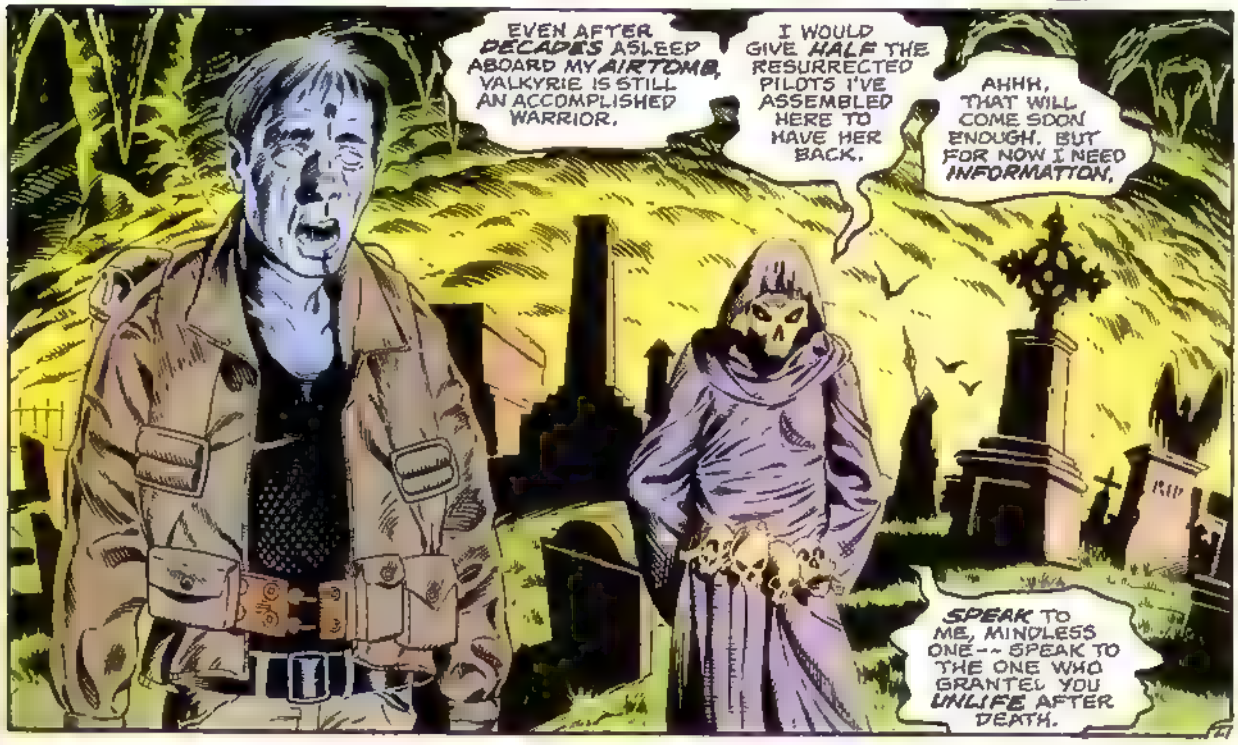

CLOSING IN...


..H-HE'S IN MY S-SIGHTS...
VAL, SOMETHING WRONG?
JUST A SUDDEN CHILL.


NOTHING ELSE.
BD-D-D-DAMM!


EXCELLENT, VALKYRIE... MISERY MAY ONLY TAKE THE CORPSE OF AN AIRMAN ABOARD THE AIRTOMB.
YOU HAVE ONCE AGAIN SERVED ME WELL.
HA HA HA HA HA

DEVILWING-2, DEVILWING-1 IS IN TROUBLE--
--LINK UP!
GOTYA. ACTIVATIN' MAG-LINK NOW!
MAG LINK
MAN'O'MAN-- THIS IS LIKE HAVIN' GOOD SEX!
HIT FULL THROTTLE AN' C'MON HOME!
DAVY--?
THEY'RE GONE, VAL.
NOT EVEN BIRDIE CAN CATCH UP TO THOSE JETS.
ON MY WAY.
DAMN! WHO WERE THOSE GUYS? AND WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON?


EVEN AFTER DECADES ASLEEP ABOARD MY AIRTOMB, VALKYRIE IS STILL AN ACCOMPLISHED WARRIOR.
I WOULD GIVE HALF THE RESURRECTED PILOTS I'VE ASSEMBLED HERE TO HAVE HER BACK.
AHHH, THAT WILL COME SOON ENOUGH. BUT FOR NOW I NEED INFORMATION.
SPEAK TO ME, MINDLESS ONE-- SPEAK TO THE ONE WHO GRANTED YOU UNLIFE AFTER DEATH.
RIP

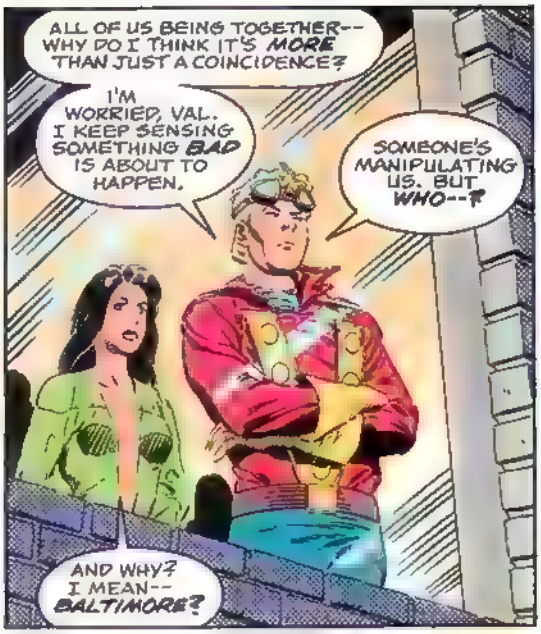
WHO COMMANDS YOU, PILOT?
SPEAK TO MISERY! NOW!
UHHHHHH...
...Z.. Z... ZZED...
THE IMMORTAL? THIS THEN IS NO COMMONPLACE FOE SIMPLE TO DEFEAT. IF HIS UNDYING HAND IS INVOLVED IN THE FEARSOME FORCES I SENSE--
--NOT EVEN MISERY CAN BATTLE HIM ALONE.
THE DOCTOR SAID I WILL RECOVER-- THANKS TO YOU.
NO PROBLEM... THAT'S WHY WE'RE THE GOOD GUYS.
BUT DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO THOSE BOZOS WERE?
I'VE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT THAT EVER SINCE I AWOKE. THEY KNEW WHO I AM. THEY CHASED ME FOR BLOCKS...
...AND IT OBVIOUSLY WASN'T TO ROB ME.
BUT I TELL YOU, ONCE THEY DISAPPEARED THE WAY THEY DID-- THAT BLEW ALL MY THEORIES.
GREAT! SO WE'RE STUCK HERE TRYIN' TO FIGURE OUT WHO'S GOT THE POWERS TO GO ZAP AND VANISH.
OKAY, SO LET'S TAKE IT FROM THE TOP AGAIN--
--DID ANY OF 'EM SAY ANYTHING BEFORE WE SHOWED UP AND KICKED ASS?
NOK NOK
COME ON IN...

HOLLY, WE WERE TRYING TO FIND YOU, AND THEN I HEARD...
HOW ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED?
I WAS ATTACKED BY SOMETHING--THEY WEREN'T HUMAN. THEY SHOVED THIS MACHINE AT ME... THEN DISAPPEARED.
WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT? I KNOW WHY I HAVEN'T AGED SINCE THE WAR, BUT VALKYRIE? AIRBOY?
WERE YOU TAKEN INTO SPACE BY LITTLE GREEN MEN, TOO?
HEY, "CLASSIFIED"--THAT REALLY YOU?
SCOTT? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
HELL, THIS IS GETTIN' TO BE OLD HOME WEEK.
I'VE BEEN ASKING MYSELF THAT SAME QUESTION, DAVY.

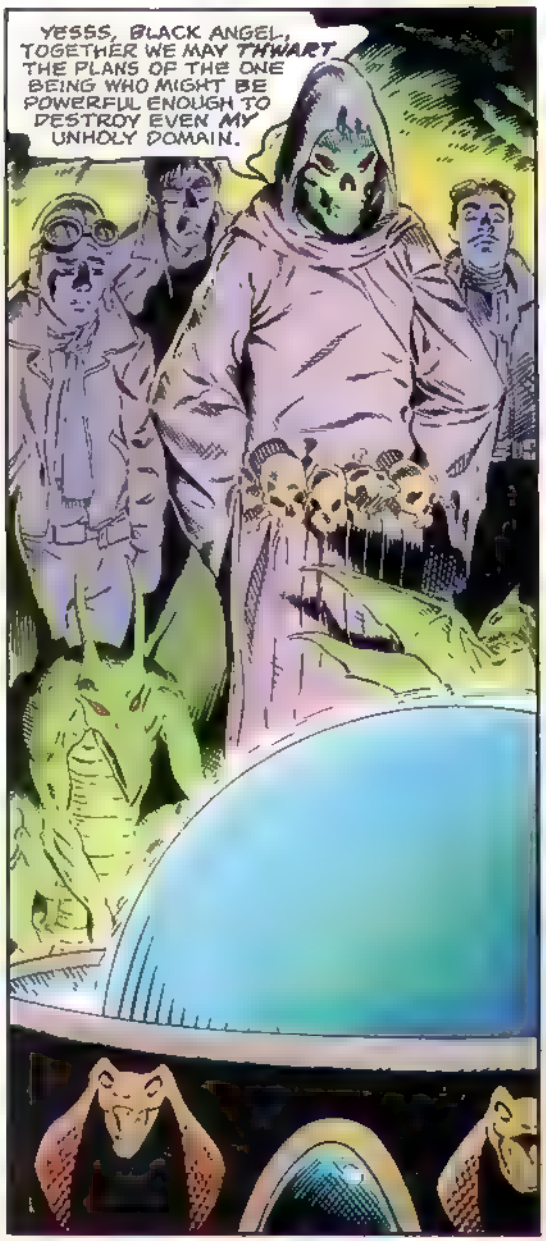
YOUR ATTACKERS VANISHED TOO, HOLLY?
SO DID THE ONES WHO CAME TO NELSON AVIATION DISGUISED AS YOU.
THIS IS VERY STRANGE.

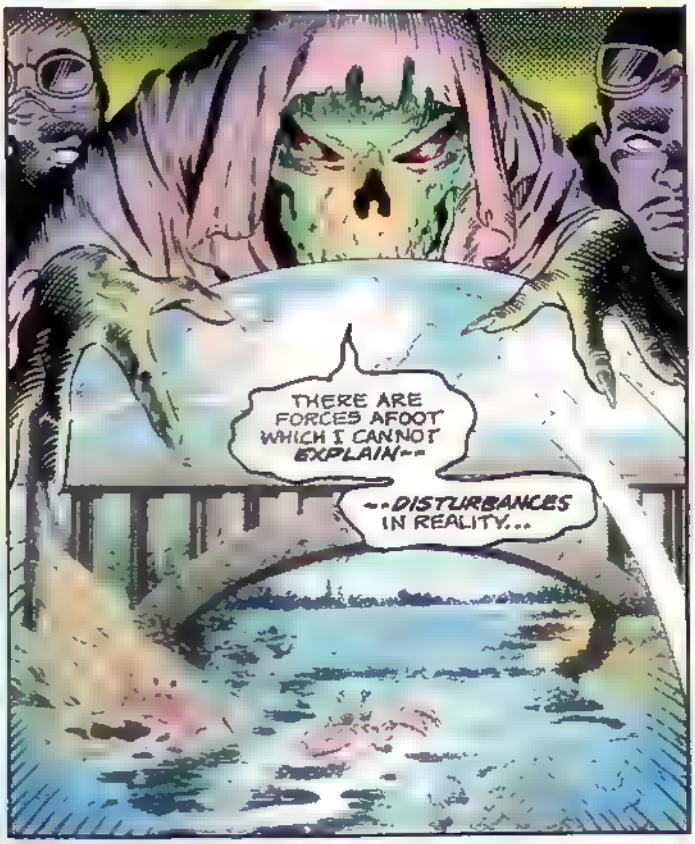
TELL ME ABOUT IT. I SAW THOSE GUYS ATTACKING YOUR FRIEND, THEN THEY PULLED OUT SOME GLOWING GIZMO AND--
--I--IT WAS JUST SO BIZARRE!

THEY WERE DISGUISED AS ME?
OBVIOUSLY THEY NEEDED TO KNOW WHAT YOU LOOKED LIKE--PERHAPS TO GET PAST SECURITY...
HOLY HELL, THIS IS GETTIN' DAMNED CONFUSING. I NEED A COLD LONESTAR!


ALL OF US BEING TOGETHER--WHY DO I THINK IT'S MORE THAN JUST A COINCIDENCE?
I'M WORRIED, VAL. I KEEP SENSING SOMETHING BAD IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
SOMEONE'S MANIPULATING US. BUT WHO--?
AND WHY? I MEAN--BALTIMORE?

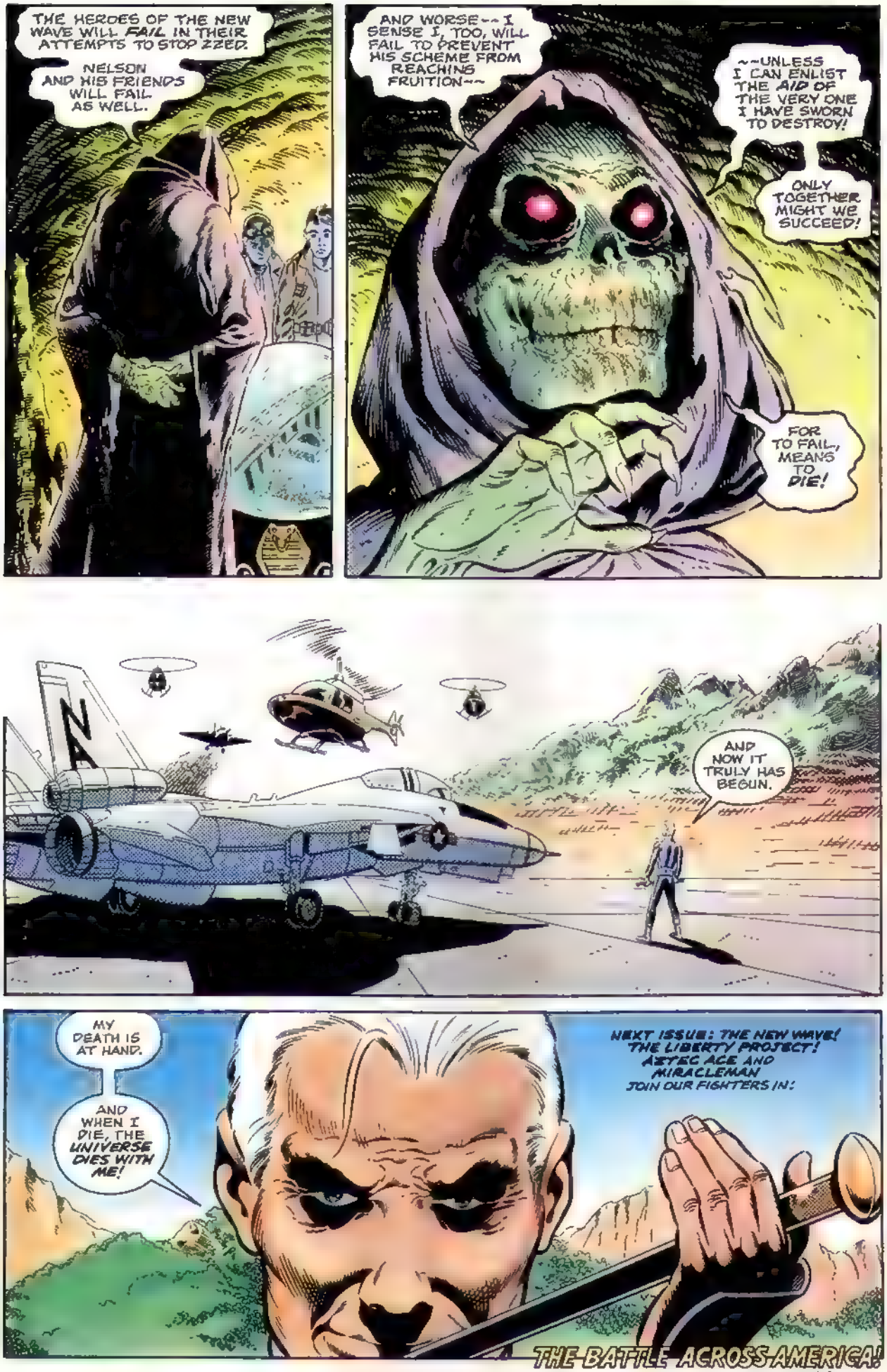
WHOEVER OR WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S BROUGHT US ALL HERE TOGETHER.
ALL OF US HAVE SPECIAL ABILITIES OR POWERS...
...AND I CAN'T HELP BUT THINK WE SHOULD STAY TOGETHER UNTIL WE GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.


YESSS, BLACK ANGEL, TOGETHER WE MAY THWART THE PLANS OF THE ONE BEING WHO MIGHT BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY EVEN MY UNHOLY DOMAIN.

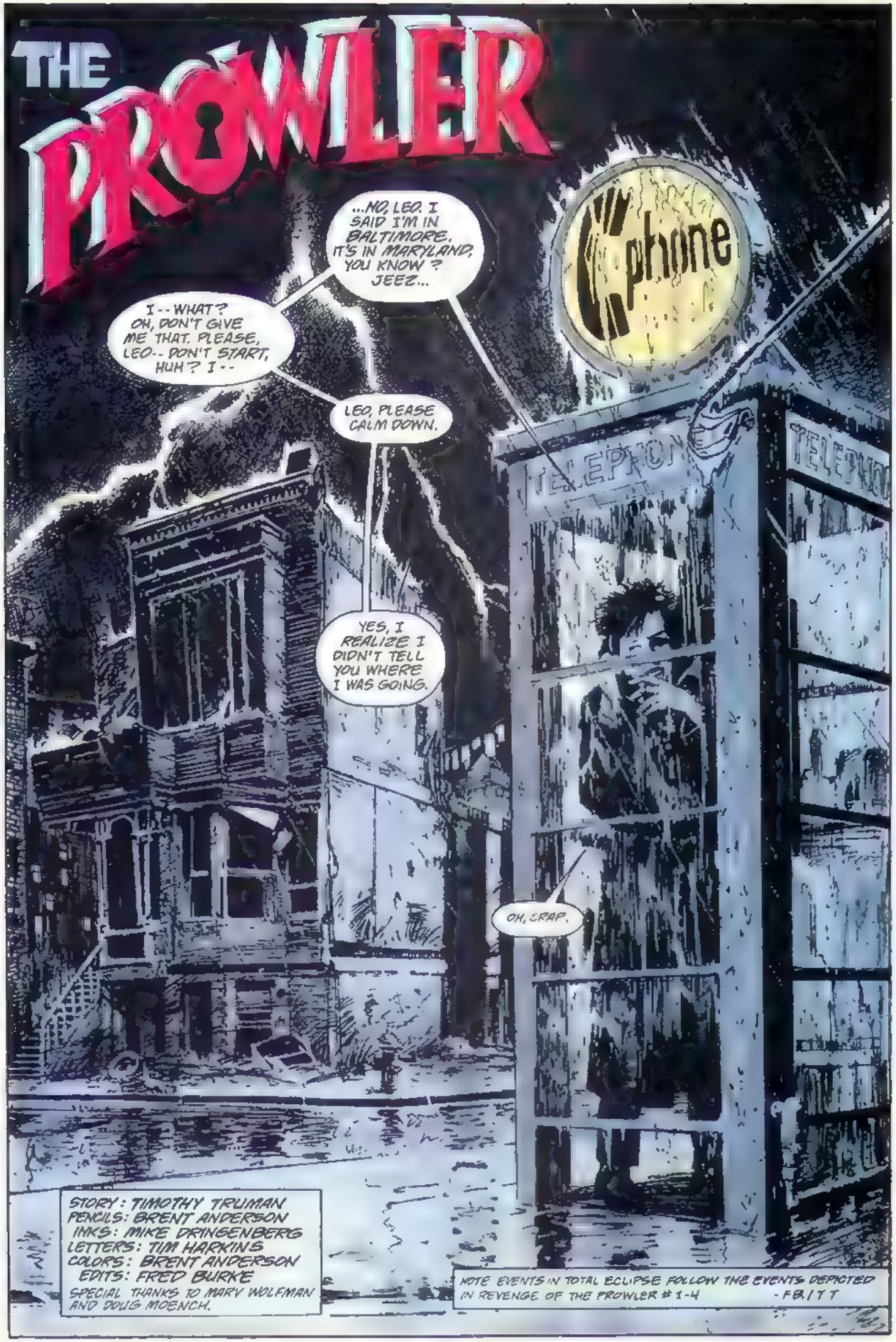

THERE ARE FORCES AFOOT WHICH I CANNOT EXPLAIN--
--DISTURBANCES IN REALITY...

...EVENTS WHICH DEFY EXPLANATION.
LOOK, MY MINDLESS MINIONS--LOOK BELOW!

"HAS HE BECOME POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CREATE THOSE ABERRATIONS?
"LOOK AGAIN--WARRIORS--THE HUMANS WHO CALL THEMSELVES THE NEW WAVE--
"THEY RISE TO BATTLE ZZED'S CREATURES. WHAT DOES HE WANT? WHAT IS HE AFTER?
"I MUST POSSESS THAT KNOWLEDGE. I MUST KNOW THAT ANSWER BEFORE IT DESTROYS ME!"


THE HEROES OF THE NEW WAVE WILL FAIL IN THEIR ATTEMPTS TO STOP ZZED.
NELSON AND HIS FRIENDS WILL FAIL AS WELL.
AND WORSE--I SENSE I, TOO, WILL FAIL TO PREVENT HIS SCHEME FROM REACHING FRUITION--
--UNLESS I CAN ENLIST THE AID OF THE VERY ONE I HAVE SWORN TO DESTROY!
ONLY TOGETHER MIGHT WE SUCCEED!
FOR TO FAIL, MEANS TO DIE!
AND NOW IT TRULY HAS BEGUN.
MY DEATH IS AT HAND.
AND WHEN I DIE, THE UNIVERSE DIES WITH ME!
NEXT ISSUE: THE NEW WAVE! THE LIBERTY PROJECT! AZTEC ACE AND MIRACLEMAN JOIN OUR FIGHTERS IN!
THE BATTLE ACROSS AMERICA!
BUT FIRST...

# INTERLUDE:

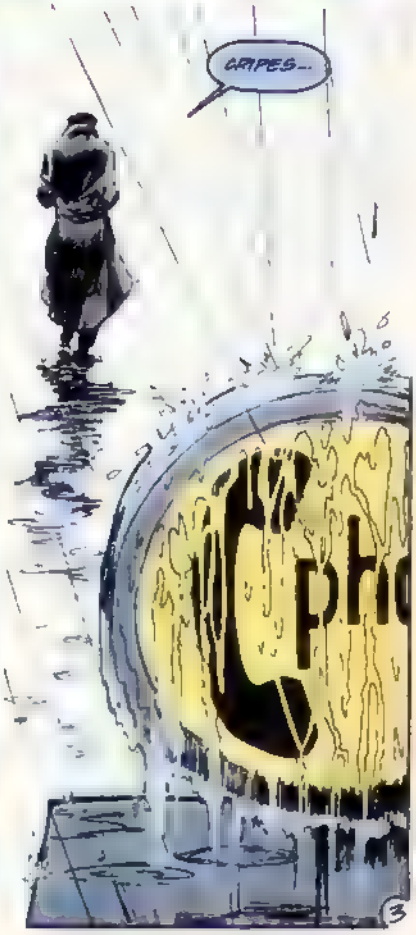

THE PROWLER
...NO, LEO. I SAID I'M IN BALTIMORE. IT'S IN MARYLAND, YOU KNOW? JEEZ...
I--WHAT? OH, DON'T GIVE ME THAT. PLEASE, LEO-- DON'T START, HUH? I--
LEO, PLEASE CALM DOWN.
YES, I REALIZE I DIDN'T TELL YOU WHERE I WAS GOING.
OH, CRAP.
phone
TELEPHONE
STORY: TIMOTHY TRUMAN
PENCILS: BRENT ANDERSON
INKS: MIKE DRINGENBERG
LETTERS: TIM HARKINS
COLORS: BRENT ANDERSON
EDITS: FRED BURKE
SPECIAL THANKS TO MARV WOLFMAN AND DOUG MOENCH.
NOTE EVENTS IN TOTAL ECLIPSE FOLLOW THE EVENTS DEPICTED IN REVENGE OF THE PROWLER #1-4 -FB/TT

HAVEN'T YOU HEARD A THING I'VE SAID?! I NEED YOUR HELP, LEO!
YES, SCOTT-- I'VE BEEN LISTENING. BUT I'M SADDENED THAT YOU DIDN'T LISTEN TO ME!
I TOLD YOU I'D BE NEEDING YOU, BOY. THESE NEXT FEW DAYS ARE GOING TO BE-- HARD FOR ME.
TELEPHONE
HARD FOR YOU?
GOOD GRIEF, LEO! I COME TO THIS TOWN TO BE WITH A FRIEND OF MINE DURING ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS IN HER LIFE, AND I END UP GETTING POUNDED BY CREATURES THAT LOOK LIKE SOMETHING OUT OF AN OLD HAMMER MONSTER FLICK!
I'VE BEEN SHOT AT! A GIRL'S IN THE HOSPITAL! PEOPLE ARE RUNNING AROUND IN GOOFY COSTUMES TELLING ME WHAT TO DO!
WHAT'S GOING ON, LEO!?
I TOLD YOU-- I CANNOT HELP YOU. NOT TODAY. NOT NOW.
IT WOULD BE THE DEATH OF ME, SCOTT.
WHAT? WH--WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
MR. KRAGG? ARE YOU-- ALL RIGHT?
2

I CAN'T HELP YOU, SCOTT.
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE GONE.
PROWLER

KLK

LEO?! MR. KRAGG...?!


GRIPES...

DAMN YOU, BOY.
OF ALL THE TIMES YOU COULD CHOOSE TO LEAVE ME.
OFF ALL THE TIMES YOU COULD CHOOSE TO DISAPPEAR..
... YOU HAD TO PICK NOW.
PROWLER
I HAVE LIVED A LONG TIME IN THIS WORLD. HA! SOME MIGHT SAY TOO LONG. I HAVE SEEN EVERY PECULIAR CURVE OF IT MUD-SMEARED UNDERBELLY, EVERY CURIOUS, EVIL SHADOW IN ITS NIGHT.
I HAVE SEEN THEM-- FOUGHT THEM--
-- AND I HAVE LIVED.
DAMN YOU, SCOTT. YOU AREN'T READY FOR THESE THINGS YET.
YOU HAVE LEARNED WELL. BUT STILL
--YOU'RE NOT READY.
WE MUST HAVE MORE TIME TOGETHER. TIME TO TEACH YOU.
TIME TO SHAPE YOU.
TIME TO...
TIME TO... TO...
AARRGGHH!!
...NO...
4

PLEASE -- JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME...
PLEASE...
IT'S TOO SOON. EVERY YEAR, THE TIME GROWS SHORTER... THE GAP CLOSES TIGHTER.
I HAVE PUT THIS OFF TOO LONG.
"DRAGONS ARE ETERNAL.
"THE BLOOD OF THE DRAGONS MUST MINGLE.
"THUS ARE DRAGONS BORN -- AND REBORN."
THAT'S WHAT HE TOLD ME -- FORTY YEARS AGO
THAT'S WHAT...
... THE CHINAMAN SAID.
CRAZY DAMNED DEVIL.
HE GAVE ME THIS FLUID. THIS POTION.
CALLED IT "A GIFT." "A REWARD." CALLED IT -- DRAGON'S BLOOD.'
IT WILL KNOCK ME OUT COLD FOR TWO DAYS.
I NEVER WANTED TO DRINK OF IT AGAIN.

THE LAST DOSE.
I WAS SAVING IT.
SAVING IT FOR YOU, SCOTT.
NOW, WE'VE RUN OUT OF TIME.
I MUST BUY A FEW MORE YEARS. A FEW MORE MONTHS.
TO TEACH YOU ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW.
TIME.
I HAVE TO BUY SOME TIME...
NO!

WHAT'S--HAPPENING?!
YOUR TIME IS FINISHED, OLD MAN! THERE IS NOTHING YOU CAN DO!
BYE-BYE!
"The worms crawl in... and the worms crawl out..."
HAHAHA
NO!
PROWLER

!?!
GRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRH!
PUEEEE!
CRASH!
uhhnnnghh!

GRRRR!
AAARR!
RATTATTATTATTA!!!

*To be continued in the pages of...**TOTAL ECLIPSE #2!***

# Ten Years After !

by Dean Mullaney

**1958:** I was four years old, saw a giant toaster, and it made me want to read.

**1968:** I learned that the same company that was responsible for the giant toaster in the Bat Cave was also responsible for screwing Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster out of what should have been their lives' pension —Superman.

**1978:** I was mad as hell and couldn't take it any more.

You could say that Eclipse Comics was formed because I believed that comics writers and artists should get a square deal. After all, I thought, shouldn't we, as readers of heroic fiction, fight for the rights of the people behind those same heroes?

When, in April 1977, my brother Jan and I (no, for the last time, we are *not* the same Jan and Dean—we came first!) went down to City Hall in New York to register Eclipse Enterprises as a publishing partnership, we didn't think that ten years later, many of our basic publishing policies would be industry standards. We just wanted to start a business with a firm moral underpinning.

I must say (and I'm speaking for Jan here, too) that receiving a letter from Jerry Siegel ten years later thanking us for our "pioneering efforts to bring ethics, common decency, and economic justice to a cut-throat industry" makes it all worthwhile.

It is we who should thank Jerry and Joe. You may think me overly sentimental, but every time I look at that letter from Jerry, it brings tears to my eyes.

I sometimes wonder what kind of world

we live in when men like Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster—who created one of the most recognizable, archetypical, righteous, and (let's not forget) profitable heroes of the twentieth century—are on the sidelines, and the fast-talking businessmen who took advantage of them have prospered beyond their due.

I thought Superman was supposed to protect us from people like that.

You may be wondering why, in this first issue of *Total Eclipse*, I'm writing about Superman, Jerry Siegel, and Joe Shuster. It makes perfect sense to me. In fact, I can throw a whole bunch of other names at you and have them make sense in this context, too—Chris Claremont, Frank Miller, George Perez, and John Byrne.

What's the connection? Each one of them has made more money from his work in comic books than Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster combined.

And they deserve the money they've earned! Way to go, Chris! Way to go, Frank! I'm all for you.

I wish Jerry and Joe and all the others, like Jack Kirby and Steve Ditko, got the royalties today's top creators get. And that's the point I'm getting at. In 1978, when we started Eclipse Comics with the policy of giving writers and artists royalties on every copy sold, neither Marvel nor DC gave any royalties. Today's creators *get* royalties, and I'm glad they do. I know it's not an exaggeration to say that it's in large part a reaction to Eclipse.

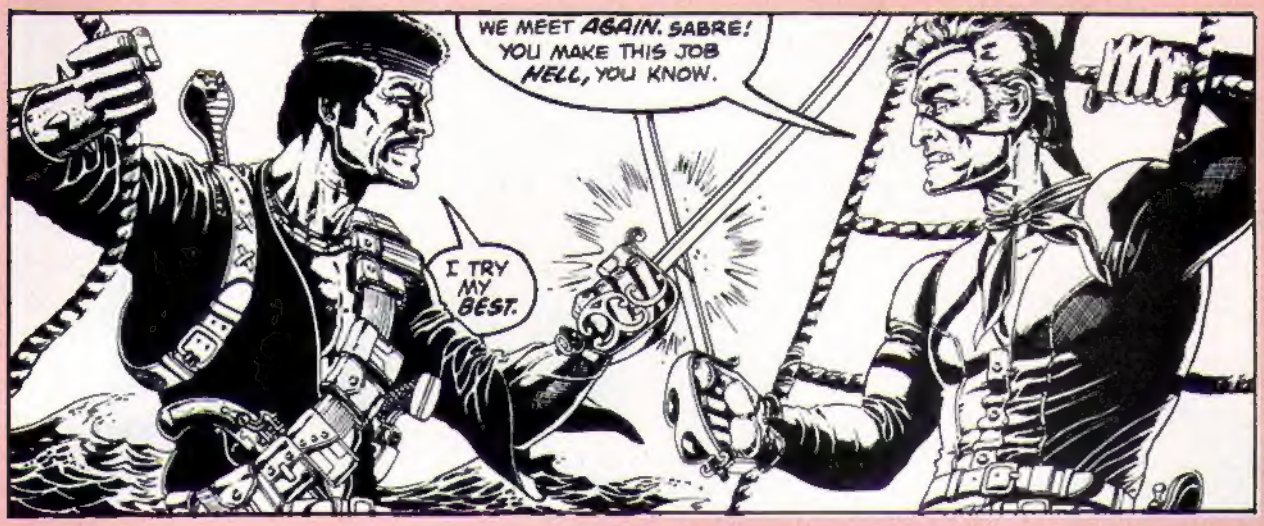
Allowing writers and artists to earn royalties is only part of the Eclipse picture. If you look at the copyright and trademark information on page two of this issue, you'll see a list that's fairly complicated and much longer than the ones you're used to seeing. The reason is simple: another of Eclipse's pioneering policies was to acknowledge that the creators were just that—creators.

Did you know, incidentally, that Chris Claremont is not the author of *The X-Men*, or that George Perez is not the author of *Wonder Woman*? No, I'm not kidding. And, no, I'm not insinuating that either of these great guys hires a ghost to do his work for him.

According to the laws of the United States of America, Marvel Comics, A New World Company, is the author of *The X-Men* , and DC Comics Inc. is the author of *Wonder Woman*. Don't believe me? Go to the Library of Congress and look it up for yourselves.

When Eclipse was formed in 1977, I made it a point to read the Copyright Act of 1976 and was particularly interested in the section dealing with the "work made for hire" clause that is an essential part of almost every comic book publishing contract from Marvel and DC Comics even today. We vowed that Eclipse would *never* force a writer or artist to sign such an agreement. And we never have.

All of this may not necessarily affect you directly, but whether you realize it or not, it




© 1988 Don McGregor & Paul Gulacy

already has.

People like Don McGregor, Paul Gulacy, P. Craig Russell, Marshall Rogers, Steve Gerber, Jim Starlin, and Steve Englehart insisted on being called the "creators" of their own work. And if they didn't insist, Eclipse wouldn't be here. And if Eclipse had never come into being, I doubt very much you would have heard of Pacific Comics, First Comics, Comico, or Dark Horse Publishing.

In 1978, when we released *Sabre* by McGregor and Gulacy, it was the first graphic novel ever published for the comics specialty market. There was nothing like it available to fans walking into into the local comics store. To this day, I recall distributor Phil Seuling, the man responsible for the existence of the specialty store market, standing up from behind his desk holding a photocopy of *Sabre* in his hands, screaming, "Six dollars for a comic book!"

Obviously, everyone's perception of comics and graphic albums has changed since our efforts a decade ago. For me, the decade began with a trip to Don McGregor's second floor loft apartment on New York's Bowery one night to watch an episode of *77 Sunset Strip* on Don's cranky 16 mm projector. This was before the advent of cable TV. If you wanted to see old television shows, for the most part, you needed to locate a 16 mm print (complete with cigarette commercials and all!).

At any rate, while Don was feeding the film through the projector, trying to see if he could recognize Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. in the tiny frames (Don always was a little weird!), I was wandering about and noticed what I believed to be a picture of Jimi Hendrix on a door. Since Hendrix was one of my musical gurus, I took a closer look and discovered that it was a pencilled drawing by Paul Gulacy. It turned out to be a new character the pair were working on, and one over which they wanted to retain copyright ownership. Are we coming full circle, or what?!

Suffice it to say, a publishing company was born later that evening between the Brothers Mullaney.

I still remember that second floor walk-up on the Bowery. I don't know who's living there now, or if the lighting supply storefront below still promises imported chandeliers to passersby. To me, it will always be the unlikely birthplace of Eclipse Comics.

"Born on the Bowery"—sounds like a bad Leo Gorcey/Huntz Hall thriller co-starring Bela Lugosi.

I've got a lot of other odd memories of that loft, come to think of it. I remember the night Don moved there from Queens. A whole bunch of us got together—among them Steve Gerber, Mary Skrenes, and Mark Gasper—to help Don transport his belongings. It took what seemed like years to pack up all of Don's books, and by the time we got over the Brooklyn Bridge and to the new place, it must have been two in the

morning, and we were all pretty punchy.

All I can really remember about the unpacking was Steve Gerber finding the doll house belonging to Don's daughter Lauren, in addition to a whole group of dolls, among them a G.I. Joe action figure. What the Joe was doing there I don't know. And I think by the time the Joe starting scaling the cold sides of their aluminum house, the dolls inside didn't want to know, either. Who would have guessed that less than a decade later Steve would be story editor for the newly revised *G.I. Joe* television show? Not the screaming dolls, for sure! They only escaped their play-time nightmare when Steve Skeates showed up with lots of people and lots of beer and the night went away.

That apartment was also the place where, I believe, Skeates dreamed up the concept of giving Underdog a Fortress of Solitude, certainly one of the strangest ideas ever introduced into the super dog's canon.

But I'm digressing . . . back to the reason for Eclipse Comics, without which this page would be completely blank and sitting in the middle of some child's school notebook, rather than filled with type and art in your very own comic book collection.

Don and I spent weeks working out possible formats for *Sabre*. We knew from the start that we wanted it to be a high quality package. The two of us, and Paul Gulacy, too, were sick and tired of the poor reproduction then standard in comics. This was, for those of you not around then, before the days of Baxter paper, when every comic in America, no matter how beautifully rendered, was printed with plastic plates on cheap, grey newsprint. Don and I finally settled on a graphic novel format, modelling it after a series of newspaper strip reprints published in the late 1960s by a great pioneer comics historian, Ed Aprill.

Just prior to publication, we arranged for *Sabre* to be previewed in the fledgling *Heavy Metal* magazine, and needless to say, the graphic novel was a smash success, premiering on September 30, 1978, and going through many editions in America and abroad. One of the first ten people to pick up a copy of this, Eclipse's first publication, was none other than Marv Wolfman.

A few of the unsung contributors to Eclipse's beginnings are not commonly known, among them Sue Pollina, who gave the company its name, and the man who designed the first Eclipse logotype—now Marvel Comics' Executive Editor, Mark Gruenwald. Ten years ago Mark and I were roommates in New York, each working in a bank, wanting to make comics our career.

Funny what a difference ten years makes!

*Next issue: Fred Hembeck's wedding, Tom Orzechowski's long-haired cats, and watching* Sleeping Beauty *with Craig Russell!*

# WHO'S WHO
## IN TOTAL ECLIPSE

**Airboy** David Nelson III follows in his father's footsteps as a heroic aviator in his bat-winged plane, Birdie.

Trapped for thirty years by Misery, this ex-Nazi awoke to find herself in love with the son of her former lover. **Valkyrie**

**Skywolf** WWII fighting companion of David Nelson II, Lawrence Wolfe continues to fight by the new Airboy's side.

Holly McCovey became the new Black Angel to save Valkyrie from Soviet charges of Nazi war crimes. **Black Angel**

**Prowler** Young art student Scott Kida has reluctantly taken up the mantle of 1940s crimefighter Leo Kragg, who is his mentor.

Movie-maker, millionaire, and vigilante, the aging Leo Kragg is the vicious and enigmatic enemy of criminals everywhere. **Prowler**

**Strike!** Dennis Foreman discovered Sgt. Strike's power harness and took it for his own, using it against CIA wishes to become a superhero.

WWII hero Russell Carlyle, captured by aliens in the 1950s, has just returned to Earth with a powerful blaster. **Sgt.Strike**

**Misery** Misery's Airtomb is final home for the guilty or wandering spirits of downed pilots, upon whose energy Misery feeds.

The immortal Zzed originally battled David Nelson II in the 1940s. To end his own life, Zzed must also destroy the universe. **Zzed**

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## Zzed

He has lived for centuries, for millennia, from the earliest days of human life on this planet. He grows weary of existence, but each attempt he makes to draw death closer ends in failure. Zzed cannot die. At least not by earthly means.

Now he seeks the ultimate end, for Zzed knows that the only way to finish his own life is to destroy the universe. After decades of seeking an answer, finally a plan begins to take form...in his dreams.

The universe is lost.

But some watch from the shadows, intent on thwarting Zzed, on turning his doomsday plan to their own ends. Others, heroic men and women from earth and beyond, seek only to stop the endless chain of destruction before it is too late. Billions of lives hang in the balance.

## Total Eclipse

It's Eclipse Comics' Tenth Anniversary. In this and future issues, you'll encounter Airboy, Valkyrie, Skywolf, Miracleman, The Prowler, Strike, the Heap, Aztec Ace and virtually every star from Eclipse's first decade of innovative comics publishing.

**Marv Wolfman**, writer, is the author of *The New Teen Titans, Crisis on Infinite Earths, Tomb of Dracula*, and countless other acclaimed comic books. The Zzed saga is his most intricate plot to date.

**Bo Hampton**, pencil artist, is well-known for his detailed linework and powerful layouts in books such as *Airboy, Lost Planet, Luger*, and *The New Mutants*. Total Eclipse is a new peak in his artistic development.

**Will Blyberg**, ink artist, has used his eye for texture, shadow, and depth on *Valkyrie!, Airboy, DNAgents*, and others. His flawless execution breathes added life into this epic adventure.

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